THE SATURDAY EVENING POST

An Illustrated Weekly Magazine
Founded A° D° 1728 by Benj. Franklin

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THE SATURDAY EVENING POST, PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

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Women as Stock Gamblers

They are Only Little Ewe Lambs for Bulls and Bears to Fleece

BY MRS. RUSSELL SAGE

STOCK gambling has become a resort for ambitious women, particularly ambitious society women. They have at times turned to it because of the impecuniosity of their husbands. The husband may have no sympathy with his wife's ambitions to shine socially. It is possible that his income is too small to gratify her desires for beautiful jewels and dresses, horses and carriages, and the giving of receptions and balls — luxuries that are so dear to the hearts of women.

There is little doubt that every ambitious household has its tragedy of this nature, its financial skeleton that stalks through the halls pointing to dishonor and disaster.

Let it be understood that in this article I desire to criticize the position of neither husbands nor wives. But I deeply deplore the lack of understanding, the absence of confidence and frank sympathy between them, which in ninety-nine cases out of one hundred is to blame for the stock-gambling habit among women. With these married women, then, there is an excuse though not a justification for this habit. What I cannot understand, however, is why an independent woman, say a widow or maiden lady, with an adequate income or salary, should wish to hazard it in the stock market. Her chances of gain, with her ignorance of methods of operating, are remote, and loss would mean an embarrassment and, perhaps, disaster vastly greater than the advantage of any profit hoped for.

Women of this class are often the prey of designing or stock-crazy men who are themselves the victims of tipsters. Lying circulars, too, winged messengers of get-rich-quick syndicates, lure many women to their financial undoing. Common-sense would show the falsity of these Wall Street pickpockets. For instance, the sender of a circular claims to have information "inside and confidential" that a certain stock is going to advance. Now, it is clear that the men who are advancing the price of this stock would not tell anybody they were doing so until they had secured all they wanted and were ready to sell to the public. The sending out of circulars at an opportune moment might even be part of the system of the insiders.

I speak with considerable feeling upon this subject, not because I have ever been victimized, but because I am recipient of countless woeful communications from victims. I have never made a deal in the "Street." Once, some years ago, however, when I was treasurer of the Woman's Hospital, I officially received two New Jersey Central bonds, the market value of which was at that time but eight per cent. of their par value. In other words, a thousand-dollar bond was only worth eighty. I put these bonds away, thinking they would remain of little value, and forgot about them. About three years afterward, I think it was, I happened to hear some rumors of the renewed prosperity of the company and I inquired of Mr. Sage regarding the value of its securities. He asked me why I wanted to know and I got the bonds and showed them to him. Next day he took them downtown and collected about three hundred dollars accrued interest which I, in my ignorance, had neglected. The bonds had then risen to eighty per cent., and shortly after, as they continued to advance, I sold one at ninety and the other at a hundred and ten, which brought the average of the two up to par. I only mention this to show how little interest I have had in the stock and bond market, how little attention I have paid to it — but, of course, on my husband's account, I have been interested in finances in a general way.

Many domestic tragedies arise through obtuseness on the part of the husband. Devoted to business, he comes to neglect the home which is more potential for good or evil. He either cannot or will not understand household economy, or possibly he just naturally won't bother with it. At any rate, his attitude is both dangerous and expensive. A good illustration of this is the story of the drummer who, on rendering to his employer his bill of expenses for a trip, frankly included a suit of clothes. The merchant demurred at the item and the salesman smiled and said nothing. When he next presented his bill of expenses his employer exclaimed:

"You don't include any suit of clothes this time!"

"Oh, yes, I do," said the drummer. "It's there all right, but you don't see it."

Now, many a merchant or banker in New York pays for a great many things that bear an alias in the bill.

I knew a woman whose husband was neither mean nor impecunious. He made her a handsome allowance for necessaries and even luxuries, but would not allow her one cent for speculation — for which she had a mania. He was wrong in this; he should have guided her financial transactions and led them along sound and legitimate lines. Well, driven to it, she went to a great jeweler and bought a three-thousand-dollar bracelet. "How much will you give me for this if I bring it back soon?" she asked.

"Twenty-five hundred dollars," said the jeweler.

She took the bracelet home, wore it a few times, to her husband's delight, and then it disappeared — for repairs. As a matter of fact, the twenty-five hundred dollars which she realized on the bracelet went into Wall Street. Here was not only a loss of five hundred dollars, but the incomparably greater loss of the woman's probity.

The practice of obtaining money from merchants and having it charged up as dry-goods, groceries, meat or jewelry, by women of social position, is due in most cases to the speculative mania. Many men are astonished at the size of the bills that they receive, and those who don't take the trouble to investigate and check the evil keep on being astonished. Probably they would be still more amazed if they knew what proportion of the bill was going into Wall Street.

Many women permit themselves to accept loans from friends with which to speculate. Perhaps this is a little more pernicious than the grocery-bill habit, since they almost invariably lose in the market and become involved in debt, often compromising their husbands and bringing about a *dénouement* that may be the breaking up of ancient friendships, if not the disruption of homes.

That the speculative mania leads to financial distress in almost every case is shown by the fact that brokers have to get a new set of customers about every three years.

Almost every man of importance in Wall Street has been a target for the woman speculator. Mr. Jay Gould escaped this sort of annoyance to an enviable degree because he was not approachable to strangers. He did not answer impertinent or unreasonable importuning letters, giving as his reason that such letters answered themselves if you waited long enough. Mr. Sage is constantly receiving letters of the old, old kind asking questions about securities and requesting inside information, the writers making pleas that range from the stocking of a farm to the raising of a mortgage from a church. But those which ask for inside information are the most irrational of all. They request that a man who has no knowledge of the reliability of the writers will trust them with information regarding the inner workings of some great financial operation. Women, particularly, request Mr. Sage not only to tell them how stocks are going, but to invest for them at his own risk and then give them the profit. The melancholy part of it is they cannot understand why his refusal or silence is justifiable. If he should say to one of them that a certain stock was going to advance she wouldn't be able to see why he couldn't purchase it for her without a margin, since, as he was sure it was going up, there could be no risk involved. That would seem logical, too, but the fact is there is always a risk. That's why men of Mr. Sage's standing in the Street hesitate to give advice to women — it involves endless explanation.

I remember a case where a certain woman had been importuning a prominent financier — not Mr. Sage — for information, and he had steadfastly refused to advise her in any way. But he was friendly to her on his wife's account. One day she got some reliable information and with it rushed to the office of the financier. As he chanced to be out at the time she demanded of his cashier that he buy the stock, but without margin. The cashier would not take the responsibility of doing this, and as the stock went up very rapidly the woman lost the opportunity of making a handsome profit. Then she turned around and threatened to sue the financier for the profit, which, through the act of his cashier, she had failed to make. I don't believe you'd ever hear of a man doing a thing like that.

Indeed, women are so unreasonable where losses occur and so ungrateful for profits that arise through the sound advice of skillful men that many stock brokerage houses absolutely refuse to take their accounts. There is a common fallacy, quite as prevalent with men as with women, however, that while for legal advice we go to lawyers and for the construction of a great work we consult engineers, financiering is everybody's business. As a matter of fact it is the most profound

and complicated science of them all. True, many persons may guess the trend of the market and make money, but that is merely accidental, not professional.

It is unreasonable to ask a man for secret information concerning a property with which he is identified. It places him in an embarrassing, even a false, position. Yet this is the indiscretion that women are so apt to commit. If he decline to talk on the subject he is likely to be called a churl, or he may be compelled, through no fault of his own, to speak equivocally.

A lady once at a reception asked me to introduce her to my husband. She said she had been very anxious to meet him as she had heard about him for years and wanted to see what kind of a man he really was. I was naturally flattered and quite disarmed by her simulated enthusiasm regarding Mr. Sage, and presented her. At the next reception she no sooner saw him than she wanted to know all about the stock of a company in which Mr. Sage was a director. Was the stock really good, she asked, a good investment? Mr. Sage could only answer that he was heavily interested in it, and allow her to make her own deductions. Yet, when the market sagged and this stock went down with the rest of it, this lady, having invested and suffered a temporary loss, blamed Mr. Sage! However, when the market recovered and the stock advanced considerably beyond what the lady had paid for it, she could not understand why she should thank him, although she had realized a considerable profit. So far as Mr. Sage was concerned, he did not consider himself responsible either for her temporary loss or for her subsequent gain. Her reproaches did not concern him, and as he expected no thanks he experienced no disappointment.

It is amusing how unreasonable, once the speculative mania has seized her, woman will become in her demands upon men who are not under the slightest obligation to her. A friend once handed me her check for five hundred dollars, saying: "I want you to get Mr. Sage to double this for me." Not long afterward Mr. Sage handed me a check for $1000, the result of a small transaction which he had made for her, and told me to send it on. "It will come back again, all right," he said. Sure enough, almost by return mail, the check returned with the request that Mr. Sage again double it. But he positively refused to do anything more in the matter. It is possible she blames Mr. Sage to this day for the fortune she lost, or rather didn't make, through this declination.

On another occasion I discovered that a friend in an inland town was writing to Mr. Sage under an assumed name for information. Occasionally she came to town and importuned him for points on the stock market. I saw her and took occasion to tell her that she was living an exaggerated, false life, that her ideas were wholly distorted and illegitimate, and persuaded her to return to her home, where I hope she stayed—but I doubt it.

Some time ago a dressmaker bought Steel common at twenty-nine at the suggestion of a broker. She bought it outright as an investment. When it got to seventeen she asked permission to see Mr. Sage, and he advised her not to part with the stock. She held on and now it is about thirty-six. Mr. Sage is an optimist. He has faith in Wall Street and in the securities produced here. Naturally, he advises persons to invest in these in preference to anything else. For instance, some time ago a widow who had got five thousand dollars insurance on her husband's life asked Senator Depew how to invest it to get an income. The Senator told her to start a thread-and-needle store. Then she went to Mr. Sage and he advised her to buy a bond.

Women are not fitted by nature to speculate. They guess at the market, which reduces the operation to mere gambling. Thousands lose through inability to grasp the principles of finance. Many of them argue speciously that they have an even chance in guessing the market and that only commissions and interests are against them. They don't seem to understand that one who merely guesses is putting up her minute individual capital and small period of time against the wearing-out power of the stupendous aggregate capital of the Street and its unlimited time. One might as well attack an iceberg with a box of lucifer matches.

The great essential of success in Wall Street is judgment, and the next in importance is courage. Now, no one doubts the courage of woman in her own natural sphere, but in the matter of speculation she is curiously lacking in it. I once heard Mr. Henry Martin, the father of Bradley Martin, say that he had never known a woman to overdraw her bank account knowingly. Mr. Martin was president of a bank. He said that women were too cautious to do so, and, continuing, remarked that they were too easily frightened to be good speculators, too apt to defer to the opinions of men who knew as little, if not less, than themselves, and were too easily duped. He remarked that he didn't know of a woman who would go into a financial deal single-handed and alone.

The famous sisters Claflin and Woodhull were for the time being successful speculators in a way, but they were never recognized as sound and scientific financiers. Their period of existence in Wall Street was brief, purely ephemeral.

Innumerable women have entered the financial maelstrom and disappeared from sight. And the word maelstrom as applied to Wall Street is a good one, since even men must be tremendously strong swimmers who would stem its currents.

What show, then, have women there?

Mrs. Harrigan Borrows a Pie

By CHARLES BATTELL LOOMIS

(Mrs. Harrigan crosses the road from her own house and enters the kitchen of Mrs. Hubbell. Into her own dooryard a buggy containing a man and woman has just been driven. Mrs. Harrigan finds Mrs. Hubbell coming out of her pantry, and opens fire on her.)

"AN' ALL THE FAMILY SO FOND OF PIES"

MRS. HARRIGAN: Good-marnin', Mrs. Hubbell. I was wonderin' if you had a pie you could lind me the loan of till we ate it. Sure, Maggie Cassidy an' her husband has just this minute druv over from Bridgetown, unbeknownst to me, an' I see them out of the kitchen windy, an' me hands in the suds, an' not a pie in the house, an' all the family so fond of pies, an' Mr. Hubbell is so dyspeptic-like that you must arlways have plinty of pies, an' I tharght I'd run over an' borry wan.

Not a bit of differ does it make if it's punkin or mince or apple, but Maggie was arlways deat' on pies, an' I want to show her that I can bake as good as annywan, an' she goin' back to Bridgetown this afternoon, I suppose.

(Mrs. Hubbell, who has retreated into the pantry, returns with a pie.)

Oh, would ye look at that! Cranberry pie, an' arl kivered wid slats like. Sure it looks like a valentine! Shall I kape the plate, or do ye want it back? I never knows. There's some wants 'em back an' some never says. Sure, what's a plate more or less? I say. But, to be sure, whin I lind a plate I want it back, because, after arl, a plate is a plate.

Did you hair about me bye, Jimmy? He kem nair bein' made baggageman in the railroad station. On'y they had wan they'd have took him if he could rade an' write better. Sure, 'tis a pity he didn't accipt it, because he can t'row a trunk six feet, he's that strarng. He's strarng as an ox, an' gentle as a kitten.

Ye didn't see annything of our kitten, did ye? We lost it last week, an' me man Mike says he come acrost it froze to deat' in a drift. It was that cunnin'. It would stand in me lap an' knock the spectacles off me face like a monkey. An' it would ate out of the plate wid the baby just like a tame chicken. The baby's gettin' fatter since the kitten's gone, an' it's a gre't loss it is, because he was so cunnin' an' so weeny.

I suppose ye haird of how nair the house was to bein' burrned to the grround on a windy day lasht wake, an' not a cint of insurance. Not a blissed cint. We was able to put it out because I was washin' the clothes, an' whin the baby lit the match, be good luck he flung it into the tub an' it wint out. But the wind was that high, an' Mike in the west lot, an' Jimmy cuttin' ice, that it was a narrer escape, an' me so lame wid the rheumatism.

I'm tellin' Mike we'd orter have thim safety matches that can't burrn at all. Sure, if ye light thim they go right out.

(She edges toward the door.)

It's wonderful what a lot of colds there is nowadays, an' the weather so chilly it's harrd to cure thim on that account. The baby was out in the rain fer nair an hour yisterday, an' me thinkin' him asleep in his crib, an' to-day he has the shniffles, an' I dunno where he caught thim, fer I'm careful to kape the window shut tight day an' night, an' blankets on him whinivver he's asleep.

Is your hins layin'? I had gre't luck wid mine this winter, fer I didn't feed thim much, corn bein' high, an' t'ree of the Leggetts' pullets come under the fince an' laid ivery day in me nest-box. The Leggetts feed thim whate, but I can't afoord it wid eggs t'irty-six cints a dozen an' mate so high.

Sure, I tell Mike we'll have to become vegetarians unless we live on pertaties arltogether, the way we did in th' ould country. It's wicked the way the butcher chairges fer mate, an' I haird him say the wholesale butchers was just as wicked. So it's a wicked lot they are, bad cess to thim! Sure, I wisht that Mike was in the butcher business to git the prices they git, an' I'd have him kill our cows, fer they're so ould it's blissid little milk we git, an' the prices I have to pay for rump steak, he'd git more for them than they're worth. But he's no good at makin' money. I tell him if he was a counterfitter like enough he'd make such poor money that the law'd not allow it if they found out.

(Opens the door and stands in the doorway.)

Well, I must be hurryin', as I know you're busy, an' Maggie Cassidy'll want some wan to come out an' hitch the horse, for her man Larry is that afeerd to touch a horse ye might think he had a dread of thim. An' his father was kicked to deat' be a mule, so it's not that.

He's cautious of t'ings ginerrally, an' he'd not be married yit if Maggie hadn't been so anxious to begin housekapin'. An' they didn't kape the house a munt' afther they was married, fer the mortgage got foreclosed, an' he had to come an' live wid her folks. He'd be a handy man for her father, who kapes a livery stable, on'y his fearin' horses, so he wanted her father to go in a business where he could help, an' th' ould man wouldn't, an' so they quarreled, an' th' ould man got the bist of it an' has had to support him ivver since.

Well, thank you kindly fer the cranberry pie. There's Maggie knockin' fer dare life at me door, an' no wan to let her in but the baby, and he can't raich the knob. Sure, I must hurry over an' welkim her, an' I hope she can stay arl night, but I know she can't, an' it's lucky, fer me spare room is full of pertaties. Mike had a gre't crop this year, an' arlmosht arl of thim bad. We can't ate more than half of 'em, an' he can't sill thim, but it's the biggest crop he ever had, an' arl because he used seed pertaties that come from the Gover'mint at Washin'ton. Sure, 'tis a gre't help they are to farmers, if Mike did vote fer Parker.

Well, good-by, an' I'll make you an apple pie in this same plate if you'll lind me the loan of some greenin's, fer our apples was burrned on the trees whin the Holts' barrn burrned, an' we had baked apples fer a week afther.

(She runs out.)

Hello, Maggie Cassidy! I'm comin'. It's glad I am to see you, an' whin did you come?

KITCHEN ARISTOCRACY

Caste in the Clothes-Press and Society in the Cellar

IT IS still an open and an anxious question whether the fashionable society that has grown up in America within the last ten or fifteen years constitutes a genuine aristocracy. The society itself hopes so and tries to believe so, and struggles to forget its uncertain tenure, its sordid basis and its humble ancestry. And it is encouraged in its pretensions by many thousands of agile and aggressive climbers who would not for worlds lose their delusion that their climbing has a goal and a goal worth achieving. But the uneasy doubts remain, and whenever one of the fashionables says, with a brave essay at the careless, matter-of-course tone, "We of the upper classes," he can't refrain from a furtive glance to see whether any one within hearing is laughing at him.

No such uncertainty, however, exists in the case of the servants of wealth and fashion. They know that they themselves are an aristocracy, and they are determined that there shall be no doubt about their being the dignified, if menial, bulwarks of an aristocracy of their employers. These servants, both male and female, are not Americans. Once in a while you will find among them a naturalized American: once in a long while you will find a shamefaced, apologetic American-born. But they are essentially an immigrant aristocracy. In Europe, the "upper class" and its haughty servants are born to their lofty stations; here, the "upper class" is manufactured, largely out of watered stock and bonds and stolen franchises, and its servants are imported. It is the natural instinct of small people, suddenly elevated in material wealth, to try to believe that the wealth which relieves them of the necessity for daily labor also produces a chemical change, a refining transformation in the clay itself whereof their singularly human-looking bodies are composed. Against this instinct is the good old American sense of humor that recognizes in the unerasable brotherhood of man Nature's mocking rebuke to the vanities of pose and pretense. But few people's sense of humor extends to themselves; and if they get the least encouragement, off they go on a high horse. The rich people of this country get a good deal of encouragement from their fellow-citizens and from foreigners in the delusion that it is not their bank-accounts but themselves that are superior. But the fashionable section would never have gone so fast or so far in this hallucination had it not been for this imported menial aristocracy.

Servants Who Control Their Masters

WHEN rich Americans first began to go abroad the servility of English servants offended. But custom soon changed that. Servility is insidious. The Americans, longing to feel themselves the equals of the complacent and secure upper class in England, and realizing that they could never hope to get deferential respect from their fellow-countrymen—even from those willing to go into domestic service—began to import servants. "The English servants are so much better, you know; understand their business and their place." But the English servant's "place" in the social hierarchy is dependent upon his master's place. Whoever seeks to lower the master in the social scale seeks to lower the servant. On the other hand, whatever raises the master socially raises the servant.

Once the imported members of the servile aristocracy were among us in considerable numbers they began to plot and to compel an aristocracy above them. The general theory is that these rich Americans who have gone crazy about themselves were infected by associating with the aristocracies of the Old World, and no doubt that association is partly responsible. But the main cause of the malady is that every American family living ostentatiously, or even at all luxuriously, soon found established within its gates an aristocracy of caste that compelled the family to seem to put on airs. And any American family that assembles a household staff of these aristocrats will soon be strutting and posing, however hard it may strive to remain sensible. The servants simply won't have it, and it isn't in human nature, weakened by the example of all around it, to resist the subtle and insinuating compulsion of the "well-bred" hints and innuendos of "well-bred" servants. A man and a woman are no longer master and mistress in their own house when they have an English butler backed up by half a dozen English footmen, an English coachman and three or four English grooms. He and she will begin to cut pigeon-wings like a gay colored gentleman on the first warm day. He and she will do it because the servants expect it, because the servants have convinced them that it is the correct form, because the servants will not tolerate any departure from the pose of "my lord" and "my lady"—and because such posings are so titillating to the vanity. And from striving to seem a truly "my lord" and a truly "my lady" before the "well-bred" butler and coachman and their henchmen, the man and the woman pass naturally and by imperceptible stages on to making the same ludicrous struggle in all seriousness before their associates, all of whom are doing precisely the same silly thing from precisely the same silly cause.

The Salary-List of a "Modest" Establishment

FULLY to realize what a tremendous pressure this servile aristocracy entrenched in the privacy of the home can exert, let us glance at the composition of a fashionable household in America to-day. Take a family of some aspiring money-lender or stock swindler or franchise grabber who has got together in one way and another—principally another—a fortune of a dozen millions or so. There are himself, his wife with the longing to be "in it" or to keep "in it" gnawing at her, the grown son and the grown daughter. Papa is willing to have the family show off, but he is not quite ready to go the limit. So the establishment is what other fashionable people call modest, and what his wife and two children tell him is "mean." Here is the schedule—the domestic pay-roll:

	Per month.
General Staff:	
Housekeeper, a broken-down "gentlewoman"	$125
Butler, formerly with the Earl of Tyne and still with him in spirit	75
Chef, a Frenchman, but thoroughly Anglicized in soul, though not in accent or cooking	80
Coachman, an Englishman, recently with her Grace the Dowager Duchess of Doodles	60
Chauffeur, a Frenchman, who speaks to nobody unless spoken to and keeps clear of the whole mess as much as possible	100
Housekeeper's Staff:	
Two English parlor-maids, from the best English houses, most expert in handling bric-à-brac and such perishables, $25 each	50
Two very humble, very impudent English chambermaids, $20 each	40
A French laundress, who disdains all but the butler and the coachman, and sighs for the haughty chauffeur	40
A seamstress, a great gossip and an authority on "fashionable intelligence"	$ 30
A linen woman, daughter of an English tavern-keeper whose glory was that he had been valet to a duke	25
A useful woman, for packing, etc., etc., most "respectable," most English	30
A useful man, for heavy work, windows, errands, etc., an Englishman who shows that he is spiritually prostrate whenever a superior speaks to him	35
Three chambermaids, very English-Irish, at $22 each	66
Butler's Staff:	
Two Englishmen to stand in the hall in immaculate livery, white silk stockings, etc., etc., $30 each	60
Two Englishmen, equally immaculate, to assist at table, etc., $30 each	60
Two other English assistants, not at all times immaculate, $25 each	50
Coachman's Staff:	
Four English grooms at an average of $25 each	100
Chauffeur's Staff:	
One assistant, learning the profession	60
Chef's Staff:	
An assistant, a Frenchwoman	25
Two English kitchen-maids or "scullions" at $18 each	36
Personal Servants:	
Valet to the master, a quiet, well-bred, insolent Englishman	60
Valet to the young master, an understudy to the other valet	55
Maid to Madame (French)	30
Maid to Mademoiselle (French)	25
Valet to the upper caste men-servants (English)	35
Valet to the lower class men-servants (English)	30
Maids to the servants, 3 at $18 (English-Irish)	54
Laundress to the servants (English)	22

Some Extras to Count In

QUITE a staff—and it does not note Madame's private secretary at $40 a month, or Mademoiselle's visiting governess at $200 a month, or extra servants of all kinds that are constantly coming and going. The total monthly pay-roll is never below $1700 a month; often, in the height of the winter season in New York or of the summer season at Newport, it climbs up to $2000. And, putting the feeding of all these people at $20 apiece a month, which is exceedingly, ridiculously low, the board-bill would be more than $800 a month. Then, naturally, all of them are as careless and as wasteful as they dare to be, and, wherever possible, corrupt in the taking of commissions from the "tradespeople." This means a squandering of more than their wages and board together. But it is indeed a most "modest" establishment—there are at least a thousand in this country far more imposing. Why, our hero has not even provided servants for the servants of his servants! And, as everybody knows, that is always done in a really, bang-up, swell, first-class establishment. Also his liveries, although what the tradespeople would call elegant, are not nearly so sumptuous as those of the neighboring establishments.

But, dissatisfied though the servants are, they do their best to keep up appearances and they fight strenuously for the caste system. They are, roughly speaking, divided into

five ranks. At the top stand the chauffeur and the housekeeper. They are almost "gentlefolk." Next come butler and coachman and chef. Each admits the right of the other two to high rank, but each feels toward the others as they fancy a marquis must feel toward an earl. Below these high haughtinesses is the main body of servants with the lowest rank made up of stablemen, scullions, servants' servants. Each servant fiercely insists upon his own station, and still more fiercely insists upon the lower station of those whom the code of caste has assigned there. And all the servants insist upon the aristocratic principle being enforced from top to bottom of the household. The "master" and his wife, the boy and the girl, know that if they for an instant drop the pose they will be the butt of ridicule and contempt in the servants' hall.

English servants do not, as a rule, like to come to this country. Few of the best class will consent to give up the splendor and assured aristocracy of England and go to live among a lot of vulgarians. Those few of the best who do condescend to exile themselves wear sad faces and show that they keenly feel the humiliation. For they cannot blind themselves to the truth that their masters and mistresses, striving hard to please and to delude, are still not really ladies and gentlemen, but just Americans. Have they titles? No. Do the common people doff the hat to them? No. Have they "ancestry"? They pretend to have, but the genealogical trees look about as much like real trees as the papier-mâché palm looks like the genuine thing. No, they are not aristocrats, and it pains the aristocratic servants to serve them much as it would pain a first gentleman of the bedchamber to King Edward to get on his knees to some "big nigger" who called himself Emperor of Ashanteeland. The commiseration of all sympathizers with sorrowful souls belongs of right to these aristocrats of menialdom in exile.

From the Gardens of Menialdom

THE great mass of these imported servants, excepting those that come here for the chance to become men and women and to shake off servitude, are a worthless lot, weedings from those perfect English gardens of menialdom. And a hard time their American masters have with them. Insolence, shiftlessness, drunkenness, petty thieving are tolerated to and beyond the most asinine patience; then, one furious day, the housekeeper, under orders from an outraged master or mistress, ejects the whole crew and gets in an entirely new lot. But this revolt of the downtrodden "upper classes" is rare and dangerous and often disastrous. For this servile aristocracy is a close corporation, very limited in members and fully awake to its own power over the plutocrats who must at any cost in money, manhood and discomfort have servility and an imitation of the English way of living. Woe, woe, woe unto the plutocrat who gets himself on the imported servants' black-list! He may have actually to close in whole or in part his vast houses, and to cease from inviting in his hordes of rich friends to see how much better he is showing off than are they. He may have to call in colored or plain Irish or Swedish servants, mostly women, to save him and his family from the horrors of waiting on themselves. But one shrinks from pushing inquiry in so harrowing a direction.

How long will it be before we have a home-grown menial aristocracy to bolster up and make strong our fashionable aristocracy? It may be longer than one might imagine. The educated people, the lawyers, superintendents, merchants, social, political and financial hangers-on, who serve the plutocracy fall easily into servile habits.. The big corporation lawyer and his family, the $50,000 a year dummy railway president and his family, eagerly pay court to the great plutocrat, bow and scrape and mould themselves to his and his family's humors. But the "lower classes" here remain obstinately insolent. They go into plutocratic domestic service only under stress; they act in a manner that exasperates their servility-seeking employers; they leave as soon as they can get any sort of job anywhere. Also, they rouse the soundly sleeping or stunned manhood and womanhood of the imported aristocracy-adoring servants, and so compel the constant recruiting of the ranks of the menial aristocracy by fresh importations.

Until this obstinacy of the "lower classes" is overcome, the plutocracy will not feel secure. The college graduate will crook the pregnant hinges of the knee for its benefit in vain. It will see only the grin of the democratic "proletariat."

THE STRING OF PEARLS

A Love Story in Pale Blue

By WILL PAYNE

JUDGE ANDREWS sat in chambers, his eyeglasses judicially placed on his large, important-looking nose. Before him, at the right, sat a very pretty woman in a smart street dress. To the left stood an old man, smooth-shaven except for a white chin-whisker and dressed in a faded, baggy business suit, with a turn-down collar and black string tie. He was looking obstinately away from the young woman.

"I thought," he said, with an unmistakable emphasis, "this was going to be a family council. I don't see any member of my family present."

Judge Andrews waved a mollifying yet dignified hand. "Harvey couldn't come. Sit down, Cotton; sit down—and talk to me." He beamed encouragingly.

Joshua Cotton sat down stubbornly, three-quarters of his back to the young woman.

"You propose," the judge began with a mellow deliberation, "to enjoin your nephew Harvey from using his own name."

"I do," said the uncle decisively; "only his name is Joshua; it ain't Harvey."

"J. Harvey," Mrs. J. Harvey corrected gently. "We thought we could scarcely live up to Joshua."

The purling accents seemed to irritate the old man. He gripped his umbrella fiercely and took his nether lip between his false teeth, making the chin-whisker stand out belligerently.

"I may as well tell you the story," he burst out, with a smoldering wrath, looking carefully at the judge and not at Mrs. J. Harvey.

"You know my brother Matt made me executor of his will and guardian of his son. You can see what he thought about it when he gave me absolute control of the property till Joshua was thirty-three. Joshua was a good boy, too; brought up plain and simple and democratic, as a self-made man's son ought to be. I didn't put a stick in the way of his marrying. I gave 'em my own house to live in."

The Court slightly elevated his bushy eyebrows and glanced at Mrs. Cotton for confirmation.

"But over there on West Monroe Street where nobody at all lives, Uncle Joshua," she murmured, "and the plumbing so bad."

"I'd 'a' fixed the plumbing!" Joshua declared, reddening with anger. "The house wasn't fine enough. That was the trouble. They had to go over to the North Side and build something tony that they couldn't begin to afford."

"I built the house with my own money, you know," said she apologetically.

"Took every cent you had, and cost you way beyond your income to run it!" He glowered steadily at the judge.

"But you could remedy that so easily, Uncle Joshua, by allowing us more income," she pleaded.

"To blow in!" he snorted. "A house, Andrews, with floors you slip on, and starched-up human monkeys to open the door and so forth!" He took his lip between his teeth again, his face distorted with helpless wrath.

"I'm standing by what I think is right," he went on, "and I'm going to stand by it, too! That boy was brought up simple and democratic, and when she led him on to throwing away his father's money on those things—horses, and automobiles, and idiotic men servants, and reckless, immoral

HIS INTENTIONS WERE EVIDENTLY NOT DANGEROUS

living—I just shut down on his income. When I sold the Cotton Brothers Plow Works to the trust, I pledged myself not to go into the plow business myself independently again nor to allow the use of the name of Cotton in competition with the trust. Now Joshua proposes to resign his job with the trust and set up an independent plant—on borrowed capital—with the family name, to get more money to blow in! I'll fight him through all the courts in the country!"

"You know, Uncle Joshua," she said to the three-quarters back, "you cut down his income from his father's estate to twenty-five hundred a year and his salary with the trust to the same figure. We can't live on that, so what should we do?"

"Come down to living as you ought!" he declared.

Mrs. J. Harvey sighed softly. "We have different ideas as to how we should live—with Cotton dividends piling up in bales. We have our own ideas as to what surroundings the boy, with his prospects, should find himself in. Really, we don't wish to quarrel or be stubborn; but I don't see how we can do less than hang to our ideas like a dog to a bone."

"I believe," Judge Andrews suggested, "that there was a Cotton in the plow trade before you and your brother. Isn't it his name, in point of fact, that Harvey proposes to use, rather than yours?"

"That ain't so!" Joshua blurted out. "It ain't so! It was Matt and me and our mother that made the name of Cotton. Our father was mighty smart, but he wasn't regular in his habits. In the little blacksmith shop out there at Circleville where it all began—and it's standing there this minute—many a night Matt stood on a box to work the bellows and I beat the iron, mother helping there, too, so's work that was promised would be done. I've seen mother more than once pick Matt up when he'd fallen asleep by the forge and carry him to bed. The plows came along and it was a good deal the same way. Father had the gift of fashioning things; but it would all have gone to pot fifty times if there hadn't been somebody to stand by. Our mother didn't believe in loose ways and irregular habits. Her folks wa'n't that kind. We made the name good. We came in here to Chicago and spread ourselves on the plant on the West Side just in time for the fire of '71 to clean us out. You know what insurance was worth then. We owed $120,000 and our assets was mostly ashes. We set up an office in a shed and I wired East and told 'em the situation, and the answer came back: 'The name of Cotton is good.'"

He gripped the umbrella with the knotty hands that had beaten the iron, gnawing his lip, speaking with a kind of passionate reluctance, as though it were being blasted out of him with gunpowder.

"I've given my pledge to the trust people, and I'll keep the name good if I have to fight till the cows come home!"

Judge Andrews thoughtfully rubbed his patrician nose with the end of his eyeglasses. Mrs. Cotton bent a little toward the forbidding back, biting a corner of her lip.

"That's great, Uncle Joshua; but—why should you be so hard on us?"

"I don't care about supporting your gentility," Joshua replied without turning his head; and he went on, glowering, with his rocky passion:

"Matt and I got to going again, reaching out for business as fast as we could and borrowing a lot of money. Then Matt insisted on putting our account into a new bank that had just been started. They'd been after him, offering us very liberal credit and all that. It was a very high-toned bank, with some heavy swells on the directory." He gnawed at his lip a moment. "I reckon Matt's wife had got a touch of what they call social ambition. Two of the women called on her and she wanted to dock the horses' tails. Maybe Matt had a spell of weak-mindedness himself. I didn't like it much; but our account was transferred to the new bank. The panic of '73 came along, and our high-toned bank threw us down; shut off our loans like that!" He banged the floor with the umbrella. "They did that to us because the high-toned president had to use every dollar the bank could spare to pull a very high-toned friend of his out of the hole. The Cottons could go to the devil. We sweat blood; but we paid

out and kept the name good. Then a couple of weeks later the swell friend of the president, that had been pulled out of the hole with the money we ought to have had, gave a grand party."

Mrs. J. Harvey murmured: "I suppose that was my father. It would be so like him, if he'd been pulled out by the skin of his teeth, to give a party."

Uncle Joshua swelled in silence for a moment; then flung out: "If I don't think so much of gentility, maybe it's because I've lugged it on my back. It *was* your father."

Judge Andrews spoke up mildly: "If anybody was to be pulled out by the skin of his teeth it would likely have been Jack Stires, for men loved him."

Joshua, reddening, glared over at the Court; but Judge Andrews was looking at Mrs. J. Harvey in a mellow and reminiscent manner. "I remember that party very well," he said. "The hostess took care to have plenty of pretty women. She could afford to, for she was the handsomest of the lot. As I recall it," he went on absently, tapping his nose with the eyeglass, "she wore pale blue, with pearls. Yes, it was pale blue with pearls. It was a great success. You see everybody'd had the sand pretty well knocked out of him then, the panic coming along so soon after the fire when the whole town was head over heels in debt. It seemed hardly any use to fight—people were that much in the dumps. But that night, after the party, some of the men who were there got together at a club. Two banks and some other concerns that were thinking of throwing up the sponge took a new grip. The word was: 'Close ranks and stand steady.' It was Mrs. Jack and her party that did it. I've often thought," he added, "that if I were commanding a garrison that was about to surrender I'd like Mrs. Jack or somebody like her to drop in and be looked at." He turned to Joshua. "You oughtn't to hold it against her."

"I didn't hold it against her! I swear I didn't, Andrews!" Joshua cried. "I met her fair and free. I gave her my house!" He dropped back in the chair, his face screwed up. "And she kicked me out of hers!"

Mrs. Cotton sprang up as though to run to him. "Oh, Uncle Joshua!——" She hesitated, looking perplexedly from the stumpy and rocky old figure to the judge and back again. "Why, there was always a place for you."

"Yes," he began bitterly; then drew the back of his hand across his lips and thumped the floor with the umbrella. "That's got nothing to do with the case! You let our name alone!"

"But it's mine now," she said.

"You let it alone!" he repeated with a jerk of his head.

"But the income, Cotton; the pale blue and pearls," Judge Andrews suggested softly.

Joshua appeared to struggle with it for a moment; then exclaimed: "I can live on in the old place out there at Circleville, and am doing it now. I bought the groceries myself at her age and carried 'em home. My wife had a black silk dress that cost fifty dollars and wore it five years."

Judge Andrews put in heartily: "Make up for it now, Cotton; make up for it now."

"Oh, you think I abused my wife as well as my nephew, do you?" Joshua snapped back.

It touched the judge's temper. "I think you owe something to yourself," he said in deep tones. "You're rolling in money. You can't decently make beggars of your nephew and his wife. You simply can't! If you bring your suit before me I'll decide against you."

"You will, will you?" Joshua shouted. "I thought so all the time! I thought you was in league with her. It's a gouge game, this family talk! There are more judges than you, I guess. You stick to your pale blue and pearls." He threw the words as opprobrious epithets in the Court's face as he jumped up and jammed the slouch hat on his head. "Buy 'em for her yourself!"

"Oh, I say, Cotton!" the Court expostulated, rising; and Mrs. J. Harvey called: "Uncle Joshua!" imploringly.

Joshua merely replied, "Go to the devil!" and stumped out, leaving them blank.

"Let him bring his suit! He can't prevent your using your own name!" said the judge indignantly.

Mrs. J. Harvey lifted her chin and her eyes sparkled. "I'll never let him! An awful lawsuit, with Uncle Joshua suing Harvey, and Harvey suing Uncle Joshua, all dragging up and down through the courts and the newspapers, and Uncle Joshua thinking I'm to blame!"

LIVING OUT THERE IN THE RAMSHACKLE OLD HOUSE

Judge Andrews rubbed his nose thoughtfully. "I don't see how you're going to help yourself," he said dubiously.

"I have a right to be as obstinate as any Cotton living. I'll never let him!" she repeated.

A month later, Judge Andrews, calling at Mrs. J. Harvey's, was startled to catch sight of Uncle Joshua with J. Harvey, Junior, on his knee. As the elder was merely pointing out words in Mother Goose, his intentions were evidently not dangerous.

Mrs. Cotton, answering the judge's surprised glance with shining eyes, said, aside: "I'll tell you," and got him away.

"Of course, I began with Harvey," she said. "But he has a great deal of temperament."

Judge Andrews nodded. "I fancy he inherits the family determination."

"He can't be happy unless he's either loving you to death or thrashing you within an inch of your life," she admitted. "And he'd got so mad at Uncle Joshua that it was dangerous to speak about it. You see, it was a fight for his wife and child, too, as Harvey saw it. So he was going ahead with his independent plant, and Uncle Joshua was getting ready to enjoin him, and he was getting ready to sue Uncle Joshua for an accounting of his father's estate, and I was feeling very blue, and we were miserably looking down our noses all through dinner if the subject came up.

"I couldn't get a foothold anywhere. One morning Harvey whistled ostentatiously while he dressed, and at breakfast he asked me very cheerfully what I'd say to an electric runabout, so I knew he was ready to move, and I begged him to wait a little. Of course, he consented; but it was the kind of thing you can't do over again. I was almost discouraged, and I suppose I caught the infection, for I blamed Uncle Joshua a great deal and wouldn't have minded doing something to him myself in a ladylike way."

"Naturally," said the judge sympathetically.

"As it happened," Mrs. J. Harvey continued, "Sally Cotton, a fractional cousin, was in from Circleville shopping that day and came to see me. Sally had her own account with Uncle Joshua. He was living out there in the ramshackle old house with a snuffly housekeeper who was also a distant relative, and driving around in a shabby old coupé, and people were laughing at him and saying he was stingy. It seemed that Circleville had waked up since they discovered natural gas, and was getting very smart. Sally's husband was in the gas and she felt the humiliation of Uncle Joshua keenly. It handicapped her in the race with the other gas-men's wives. So she had won over the snuffly relative—showing her the kingdoms of the world that might be hers if Uncle Joshua would only loosen up—and they had made a dead set at the old man, and he had thrown them both out of the house. Of course, everybody knew it, as they do in a little town, and somebody had tacked up signs on the soldiers' monument that Cotton Brothers had given—being too busy making plows to go to the war themselves. And Sally felt that she might almost as well give up unless she could get help. So I agreed to come out and make her a visit. She calculated, you see, that a visit from me would put her ahead as much as Uncle Joshua had set her back. Sally is what might be called a fluent conversationalist—especially if she has any trouble on her mind, and I suppose she spoke to her friends about my coming."

Mrs. Cotton hesitated a moment. "I don't pretend to apologize. It simply seemed to me that day that a declaration of independence of Uncle Joshua would make me feel better, and once I'd said I'd go I couldn't very well take it back. So I went.

"Uncle Joshua was in Chicago that day; but undoubtedly Sally knew when he was expected. We had a party that night. I imagine my gown laid out as many of Sally's friends as she had counted upon. Anyway, she seemed happy. The next afternoon she walked me down through town to the station. There was a shabby old coupé waiting by the platform with a middle-aged man in his shirt-sleeves. Then I understood Uncle Joshua was coming on that train and Sally had brought me there for a little dramatic purpose of her own—in the sight of his old neighbors, you see. But I couldn't very well run away.

"The old man stepped off the train, and saw me and the crowd, which was partly grinning. He looked very old and bent over. And—though I hadn't meant it at all—I was right beside him with my hand under his arm; and I whispered to him: 'I've come to see you, too, Uncle Joshua.'

"He never said a word, but stood aside to let me climb into the coupé first, and we drove through town, with people looking at us, to his house, and sat on the saggy porch. There I was, you see, almost like Benedict Arnold. And there was Uncle Joshua never opening his head. So I asked him all about the old town and the blacksmith shop and the plows, and he said 'yes' and 'no,' and dropped my hand in an uncertain sort of way when I left. I told Sally I couldn't help it; but she was rather cool, so I came home the next day.

"The next afternoon Uncle Joshua called.

"He came in looking as rocky and stubborn as ever I saw him. He carried a package and he just held it out to me without a word, only I saw that his hand shook a little. I was all in a wonder. Of course, I took it and said: 'For me, Uncle Joshua?'"

Mrs. Cotton hesitated, and softly bit the corner of her lip. "When I looked at him then I knew why he didn't speak," she said in an uncertain voice, hardly above a whisper; and the judge, in a wonder as great as that she had mentioned, perceived in her bright eyes what often makes speech difficult and quite unnecessary. She crossed the room and came back with an oblong box.

"This is what he brought," she gently explained.

Judge Andrews opened it and saw a costly string of pearls. Then he examined her face and delivered judgment under his breath: "Why, my dear, he was in love with you all the time."

"It was changing the name and the new house and so on that made him think I'd tried to get him to be fond of me only for the money; and then he bore on all the harder because——." She paused, and again that new light came into her eyes. "Oh, what's the use in explaining? For I was rather in love with Uncle Joshua all the time, too."

The judge was looking steadily out of the window as he replied absently: "How well I recall your mother!"

SPEAKING WITH A KIND OF PASSIONATE RELUCTANCE, AS THOUGH IT WERE BEING BLASTED OUT OF HIM WITH GUNPOWDER

THE TRIUMPHS OF EUGÈNE VALMONT—By Robert Barr

MORE LIKE A FORTRESS THAN A RESIDENCE

The Ghost with the Clubfoot

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CELEBRATED critics have written with scorn of what they call "the long arm of coincidence" in fiction. Coincidence is supposed to be the device of a novelist who has not ingenuity enough to construct a book without it. In France our incomparable writers pay no attention to this, because they seem favored with a deeper insight into real life than is the case with the British. The superb Charles Dickens, possibly as well known in France as he is wherever the English language is read, a man who loved French soil and the French people, probably probed deeper into the intricacies of human character than any other novelist of modern times, and if you read his works you will see that he continually makes use of coincidence. The experience that has come to me throughout my own strange and varied career convinces me that coincidence happens in actual life with exceeding frequency, and this fact is especially borne in upon me when I set out to relate my conflict with the Rantremly ghost, which wrought startling changes upon the lives of two people, one an objectionable, domineering man, and the other a humble and crushed woman. Of course, there was a third person, and the consequences that came to him were the most striking of all, as you will learn if you do me the honor to read this account of the episode.

So far as coincidence is concerned, there was first the arrival of the newspaper clipping, then the coming of Sophia Brooks, and when that much-injured woman left my flat I wrote down this sentence on a sheet of paper:

"Before the week is out, I predict that Lord Rantremly himself will call upon me."

Next day there was brought in the card of Lord Rantremly.

I must begin with the visit of Sophia Brooks, for though that comes second, yet I had paid no attention in particular to the newspaper clipping until the lady told her story. My servant brought me a typewritten sheet of paper on which were set down the words:

"Sophia Brooks, Typewriting and Translating Office, first floor, No. 51 Beaumont Street, Strand, London, W. C."

I said to my servant:

"Tell the lady as kindly as possible that I have no typewriting work to give out, and that, in fact, I have a stenographer and typewriting machine on the premises."

A few moments later my man returned and said the lady wished to see me, not about typewriting, but regarding a case in which she hoped to interest me. I had still some hesitation in admitting her, for my transactions had now risen to a higher plane than when I was new to London. My expenses were naturally very heavy, and it was not possible for me, in justice to myself, to waste time in commissions from the poor, which, even if they resulted successfully, meant little money added to my banking account, and often nothing at all, because the client was unable to pay. As I remarked before, I possess a heart the most tender, and therefore must, greatly to my grief, steel myself against the enlisting of my sympathy, which, alas, has frequently led to my financial loss. Still, sometimes the apparently poor are involved in matters of extreme importance, and England is so eccentric a country that one may find himself at fault if he closes his door too harshly. Indeed, ever since my servant threw downstairs the persistent and tattered beggarman, as he judged him, who turned out later to be his Grace the Duke of Ventnor, I have always cautioned my subordinates not to deduce too hastily from appearances.

"Show the lady in," I said, and there came to me, hesitating, backward and abashed, a woman of perhaps thirty-five years, dressed with distressing plainness when one thinks of the charming costumes to be seen on a Parisian boulevard. Her subdued manner was that of one to whom the world had been cruel. I rose, bowed profoundly, and placed a chair at her disposal with the air I should have used if my caller had been a royal princess. I claim no credit for this: it is of my nature. There you behold Eugène Valmont. My visitor was a woman. *Voilà!*

"Madam," I said politely, "in what may I have the pleasure of serving you?"

The poor woman seemed for the moment confused, and was, I feared, on the verge of tears, but at last she spoke, and said:

"Perhaps you have read in the newspapers of the tragedy at Rantremly Castle?"

"The name, madam, remains in my memory, associated elusively with some hints of seriousness. Will you pardon me a moment?" A vague thought that I had seen the castle mentioned either in a newspaper, or a clipping from one, caused me to pick up the latest bunch which had come from my agent. I have no vanity at all, but still it is amusing to note what the newspapers say of one, and, therefore, I have subscribed to a clipping agency. In fact, I pay for two subscriptions, one personal, and the other calling for any pronouncement pertaining to the differences between England and France, for it is my determination to write a book on the comparative characteristics of the two peoples. I hold a theory that the English are utterly incomprehensible to the rest of humanity, and this will be duly set out in my forthcoming volume.

I speedily found the clipping I was in search of. It proved to be a letter to the Times, and was headed: "Proposed Destruction of Rantremly Castle." The communication went on to say that this edifice was one of the most noted examples of Norman architecture in the North of England; that Charles II had hidden there for some days after his disastrous defeat at Worcester. Part of the castle had been battered down by Cromwell, and later it again proved the refuge of a Stuart when the Pretender made it a temporary place of concealment. The new Lord Rantremly, it seemed, had determined to demolish this ancient stronghold, so interesting architecturally and historically, intending to build with its stones a modern residence. Against this act of vandalism the writer strongly protested, and suggested that England should acquire the power, which France constantly exerts, of making a historical monument of any edifice so interwoven with the fortunes of the country.

"Well, madam," I said, "all this extract alludes to is the coming demolition of Rantremly Castle. Is that the tragedy of which you speak?"

"Oh, no!" she exclaimed. "I meant the death of the eleventh Lord Rantremly about six weeks ago. For ten years Lord Rantremly lived practically alone in the castle. Servants would not stay because the place was haunted, and well it may be, for a sinful family the Rantremlys have been, and a cruel, as I shall be able to tell you. Up to a month and a half ago Lord Rantremly was waited on by a butler older than himself, and, if possible, wickeder. One morning this old butler was coming up the stairs from the kitchen with Lord Rantremly's breakfast on a silver tray. His lordship always partook of breakfast in his own room. It is not known how the accident happened, as the old servant was going up the stairs instead of coming down, but the stairs are very smooth and slippery, and without a carpet; at any rate, he seems to have fallen from the top to the bottom, and lay there with a broken neck. Lord Rantremly, who was very deaf, perhaps did not hear the crash, and it is supposed that after ringing and ringing in vain, and doubtless working himself into a violent fit of temper, as was his custom, the old man came out of bed, and walked barefoot down the stair upon the body of his ancient servant and confederate. There the man who comes in every morning to light the fires found them, the servant dead, and Lord Rantremly helpless from an attack of paralysis. The physicians say that only his eyes seemed alive, and they were filled with a great fear. His right hand was but partially disabled, and with that he tried to scribble something which is indecipherable. And so he died, and those who attended him at his last moments say that if ever a soul had a taste of future punishment before it left this earth it was the soul of Lord Rantremly as it shone through those terror-stricken eyes."

Here the woman stopped, with a catch in her breath, as if the fear of that grim deathbed had communicated itself to her.

"And it is the present Lord Rantremly who proposes to destroy the castle, I suppose?"

"Yes."

"Is he the son of the late lord?"

"No, he is a very distant relative, and the branch of the family to which he belongs has been engaged in commerce, and I believe its members are very wealthy."

"Well, madam, no doubt this is all extremely interesting, and rather gruesome. In what way are you concerned in these occurrences?"

"Ten years ago I replied to an advertisement, there being required one who knew shorthand, who possessed a typewriting machine and a knowledge of French, to act as secretary to a nobleman. I was at that time twenty-three years old, and for two years had been trying to make my living in London through the typing of manuscript. But I was enduring a hard struggle, so I applied for this position, and got it. There are in the library of Rantremly Castle many documents relating to the Stuart exile in France. His lordship wished these documents assorted and catalogued, as well as copies taken of each. Many of the letters were in the French language, and these I was required to translate and type. It was a sombre place of residence, but the salary was good, and I saw before me work enough to keep me busy for years. Besides this, the task was extremely congenial, and I became absorbed in it, being young and romantically inclined. Here I seemed to live in those wonderful intrigues of long ago, transcribing documents the very possession of which at one period meant capital danger, bringing up

"IT IS NOT KNOWN HOW THE ACCIDENT HAPPENED"

Editor's Note—This is the third of a series of six stories by Mr. Barr, each complete in itself, but all dealing with the adventures of the detective, Eugène Valmont.

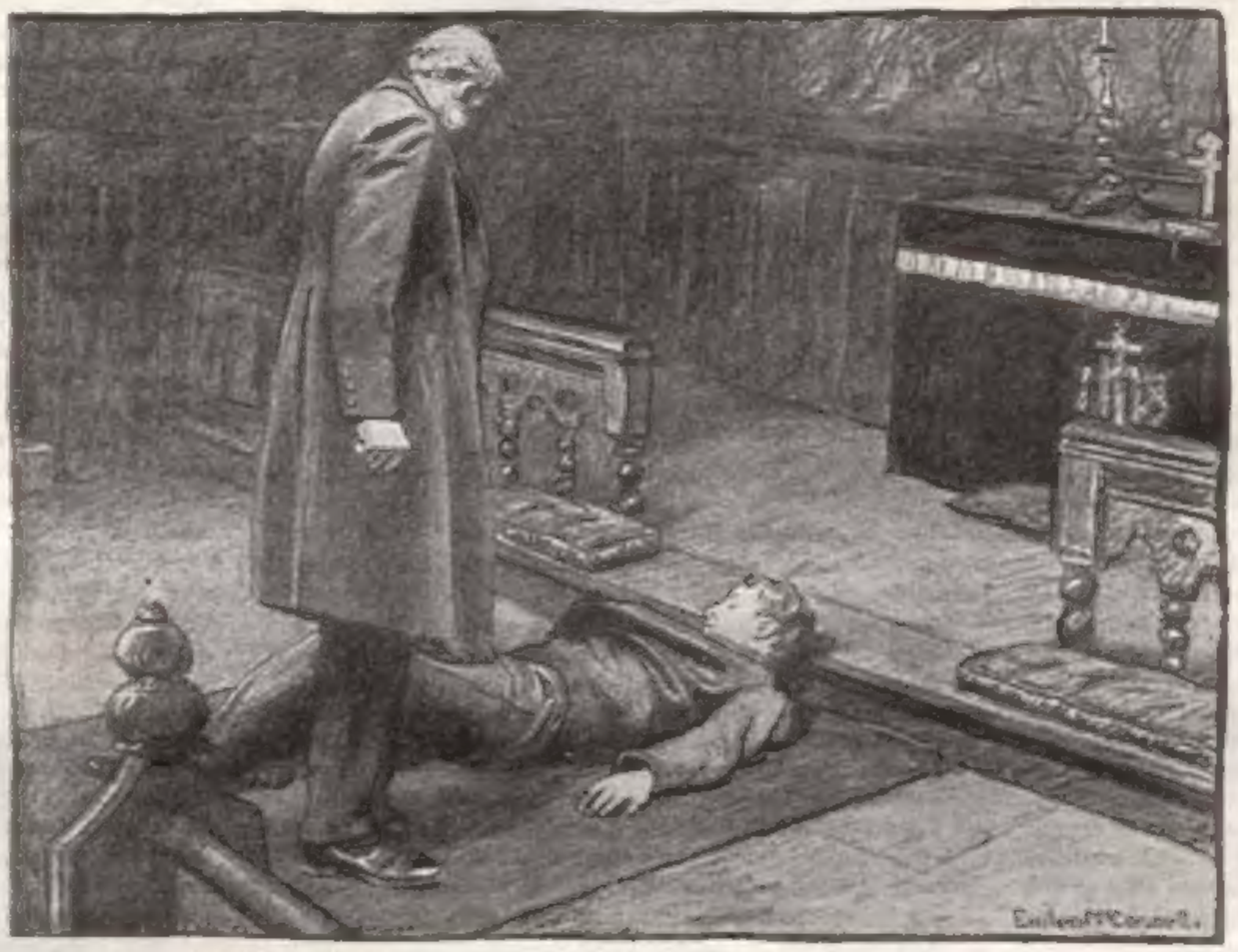
even now visions of block, axe and masked headsman. It seemed strange to me that so sinister a man as Lord Rantremly, who, I had heard, cared for nothing but drink and gambling, should have desired to promote this historical research, and, indeed, I soon found he felt nothing but contempt for it. However, he had undertaken it at the instance of his only son, then a young man of my own age, at Oxford.

"Lord Rantremly at that time was sixty-five years old. His countenance was dark, harsh and imperious, and his language was brutal. He was a man given to frightful outbursts of temper, but he paid so well for service that there was no lack of it. He was very tall, and of commanding appearance, but had a deformity in the shape of a clubfoot, and walked with the halting step of one so afflicted. There was at that time no scarcity of servants in the castle, for, although there existed a tradition that the ghost of the founder of the house trod certain rooms, this ghost, it was said, never walked when the living representative of the family was a man with a clubfoot. It was also a tradition that if this clubfooted ghost allowed its halting footsteps to be heard while the reigning lord possessed a similar deformity, the conjunction foreshadowed the passing of title and estates to a stranger. The ghost haunted the castle only when it was occupied by a descendant whose two feet were normal. It seems that the founder of the house was a clubfooted man, and this disagreeable peculiarity sometimes missed one generation, sometimes two, and at other times both father and son had clubfeet, as was the case with the late Lord Rantremly and the young man at Oxford. I am not a believer in the supernatural, of course, but, nevertheless, it is strange that within the past few years every one residing in the castle has heard the clubfooted ghost, and now title and estates have passed to a man who is an utter stranger to the Rantremlys."

"Well, madam, this also sounds most alluring, and were my time not taken up with affairs more material than those to which you allude, I should be content to listen all day, but as it is——" I spread my hands and shrugged my shoulders.

The woman, with a deep sigh, said:

"I am sorry to have taken so long, but now I will come direct to the heart of the case. I worked alone in the library. The chaplain, a great friend of Lord Rantremly's son, and, indeed, a former tutor of his, assisted me with the documents that were in Latin, and a friendship sprang up between us. He was an elderly man, extremely unworldly, and Lord Rantremly never concealed his scorn for him, but did not interfere with him because of the son.



"THE MADDENED NOBLEMAN STRUCK HIS SON FULL IN THE FACE WITH HIS CLENCHED FIST"

"My work went on very pleasantly up to the time that Reginald, the son of his lordship, came down from Oxford. Then began the happiest days of a life that otherwise has been full of hardships and distress. Reginald was as different as possible from his father. In one respect only did he bear any resemblance to that terrible old man, and this resemblance was the deformity of a clubfoot, a blemish which one soon forgot when one came to know the gentle and high-minded nature of the young man. As I have said, it was at his instance that Lord Rantremly had engaged me to set in order those historical papers. Reginald became enthusiastic at the progress I had made, and thus the young nobleman, the chaplain and myself continued our work together with ever-increasing enthusiasm. To cut short a recital which must be trying to your patience, but which is necessary if you are to understand the situation, I may say that our companionship resulted in a proposal of marriage to me, which I, foolishly, perhaps, and selfishly, it may be, accepted. Reginald knew that his father would never consent, but we enlisted the sympathy of the chaplain, and he married us one day in the consecrated chapel of the castle.

"The house at that time contained many servants, and I think, without being sure, that the butler, whom I feared even more than Lord Rantremly himself, got some inkling of what was going forward. He and his lordship entered the chapel just as the ceremony was finished, and there followed an agonizing scene. His lordship flung the ancient chaplain from his place, and, when Reginald attempted to interfere, the maddened nobleman struck his son full in the face with his clenched fist, and my husband lay as one dead on the stone floor. By this time the butler had locked the doors, had rudely torn the vestments from the aged, half-insensible clergyman, and with these tied him hand and foot. All this took place in a very few moments, and I stood there paralyzed, unable either to speak or scream—not that screaming would have done me any good in that horrible place of thick walls. The butler produced a key, and unlocked a small private door at the side of the chapel, which led from the apartments of his lordship to the family pew. Then taking my husband by feet and shoulders, Lord Rantremly and the butler carried him out, locking the door, and leaving the dazed clergyman and myself prisoners in the chapel.

"In a short time I heard the key turn again in the lock of the private door. The butler came in alone, and, unloosening the bands around the clergyman's knees, escorted him out, once more locking the door. A third time that sinister servant entered, grasped me roughly by the wrist, and, without a word, dragged me with him along a narrow passage, up a stair, and finally to the main hall, and so to my lord's private study, which adjoined his bedroom, and there on a table I found my typewriting machine brought up from the library. I have but the most confused recollection of what took place. I am not a courageous woman, and was in mortal terror both of Lord Rantremly and his attendant. His lordship was pacing up and down the room, and when I came in ordered me to write at his dictation, swearing that if I did not do exactly as he told me he would finish his son, as he put it. I sat down at the machine, and he dictated a letter to himself, demanding £2000 to be paid to me, otherwise I should claim that I was the wife of his son, secretly married. This, placing pen and ink before me, he compelled me to sign, and when I had done so, pleading to be allowed to see my husband, if only for a moment, I thought he was going to strike me, for he shook his fist in my face and used words that were appalling to hear. That was the last I ever saw of Lord Rantremly, my husband, the clergyman or the butler. I was at once sent off to London with my belongings, the butler himself buying my ticket, and flinging a handful of sovereigns into my lap as the train moved out."

Here the woman stopped, buried her face in her hands, and began to weep.

"Have you done nothing about this for the past ten years?"

She shook her head.

"What could I do?" she gasped. "I had little money, and no friends. Who would believe my story? Besides this, Lord Rantremly had in his possession that letter to convict me of attempted blackmail."

"You have no marriage certificate, of course?"

"No."

"What has become of the clergyman?"

"I do not know."

"And what of Lord Rantremly's son?"

"It was announced that he had gone on a voyage to Australia for his health, in a sailing ship which was wrecked on the African coast, and every one on board lost."

"What is your own theory?"

"Oh, my husband was killed by the blow given him in the chapel!"

"Madam, that does not seem credible. A blow from the fist seldom kills."

"But he fell backward, and his head struck the sharp stone steps at the foot of the altar."

"You think the clergyman also was murdered?"

"I am sure of it. Both master and servant were capable of any crime or cruelty."

"You have no letters from the young man?"

"No. You see, during our short friendship we were constantly together, and there was no need of correspondence."

"Well, madam, what did you expect me to do?"

"I hoped you would investigate, and find, perhaps, where Reginald and the clergyman are buried. I realize that I have no proof, but in that way my strange story will be corroborated."

I leaned back in my chair and looked at her. Truth to tell, I only partially credited her story myself, and yet I was positive she believed every word of it. Ten years' brooding on fancied injustice by a woman living alone, and doubtless often in dire poverty, had mixed together the actual and the imaginary, until now what had possibly been an aimless flirtation on the part of the young man had formed itself into the tragedy of which she had told me.

"Would it not be well," I said at last, "to lay the facts before the present Lord Rantremly?"

"I have done so," she answered simply.

"With what result?"

"His lordship said my story was preposterous. He has examined the late lord's private papers, and has discovered the letter which I typed and signed. He said very coldly that the fact that I had waited until every one who could substantiate or deny my story was dead, united with the improbability of the story itself, would very likely consign me to prison if I made public a statement so incredible."

"Well, you know, madam, I think his lordship is right."

"He offered me an annuity of fifty pounds, which I refused."

"Well, madam, I think you are wrong. If you take my advice you will accept that annuity."

The woman rose slowly to her feet.

"It is not money I am after," she said, "although, Heaven knows, I need it often enough. But I am Lady Rantremly, and I wish my rights to that name acknowledged. My character has been under an impalpable shadow for ten years. On several occasions mysterious hints have reached me that in some manner I left the castle under a cloud. If Lord Rantremly will destroy the letter which I wrote under duress, and if he will give me written acknowledgment that there was nothing to be alleged against me during my stay in the castle, he may enjoy his money in peace for all of me. I want none of it."

"Have you asked him to do this?"

"Yes. He refuses to give up or destroy the letter, although I told him in what circumstances it had been written. But, desiring to be fair, he said, he made that offer to allow me a pound a week for life entirely through his own generosity."

"Madam, I regret to say that I cannot see my way to do anything with regard to what I admit is very unjust usage. We have absolutely nothing to go upon but your unsupported word. Lord Rantremly was perfectly right when he said no one would credit your story. I could not go down to Rantremly Castle and make investigations there. I should have no right upon the premises at all, and might get into instant trouble as an interfering trespasser. I beg you to heed my advice, and accept the annuity."

Sophia Brooks, with that mild obstinacy of which I had received indications during her recital, slowly shook her head.

"You have been very kind to listen to me for so long," she said, and then, with a curt "Good-day," turned and left the room. On the paper underneath her address I wrote the prediction: "Before the week is out, I predict that Lord Rantremly himself will call upon me."

Next morning, at almost the same hour that Miss Brooks had arrived the day before, the card of Lord Rantremly was brought in to me.

His lordship proved to be an abrupt, ill-mannered, dapper business man; purse-proud, I should class him, as he had every reason to be—for he had earned his own fortune—and doubtless proud also of his new title, which he was trying to live up to, assuming now and then a haughty, domineering attitude, and again relapsing into the keen, incisive manner of the man of affairs: shrewd financial sense waging a constant struggle with the glamour of an ancient name. I am sure he would have shone to better advantage either as the merchant or the peer. I took an instinctive dislike to the man, which probably would not have happened had he been wearing the title for twenty years, or had I met him as a business man, with no thought of the aristocratic honor awaiting him. There was little in common with him and the last holder of the title. He had keen, ferrety eyes, a sharp financial nose, a thin-lipped line of mouth which indicated a scarcity of human kindness. He was short of stature, but he did not possess the clubfoot, which was one advantage.

He seated himself before I had time to offer him a chair, and he kept on his hat in my presence, which he would not have done if he had been either a genuine nobleman or a courteous business man. I think it was the combination that placed him at a disadvantage.

"I am Lord Rantremly," he announced pompously, which announcement was quite unnecessary, because I held his card in my hand.

"Quite so, my lord. And you have come to learn whether or no I can lay the ghost in that old castle to the North which bears your name."

"Well, I'm blessed!" cried his lordship, agape. "How could you guess that?"

"Oh, it is not a guess, but rather a choice of two objects that might bring you to my rooms. The other object, I suppose, you would settle with your solicitor, and he doubtless told you that Miss Sophia Brooks had no claim whatever; that you are quite right in refusing to give up or destroy the typewritten letter she signed ten years ago, and that it was weakness on your part, without consulting him, to offer her an annuity."

Long before this harangue was finished—and I uttered it in an easy and nonchalant tone of voice, as if reciting something that everybody knew—his lordship was on his feet again, staring at me like a man thunderstruck. This gave me the opportunity of exercising that politeness which his abrupt entrance and demeanor had forestalled. I rose, and, bowing, said:

"I pray you to be seated, my lord."

He dropped into the chair rather than sat down.

"And now," I continued with the utmost suavity, stretching forth my hand, "I will place your hat on the shelf, where it will be out of the way, and will not incommode you during our discourse."

Like a man in a dream, he took his hat from his head and handed it to me. After placing it in safety, I resumed my chair with the comfortable feeling that we were much nearer a plane of equality than when he had entered the room.

"And now, my lord," said I genially, "how about the ghost with a clubfoot? May I take it that in the City—that sensible, commercial portion of London—no spirits are believed in except those sold over the bars?"

"If you mean," said his lordship, struggling to reach his dignity once more—"If you mean there is any one fool enough to believe in a ghost, I answer no. I am a practical man, sir. I now possess in the North property representing in shooting rights, and what not, a locked-up capital of many thousand pounds. As you seem to know everything, sir, perhaps you are aware that I propose to build a modern mansion on the estate."

"Yes; I saw the letter in the Times."

"Very well, sir. It has come to a fine pass if, in this country of law and the rights of property, a man may not do what he pleases with his own."

"I think, my lord, cases may be cited where the decisions of your courts have shown a man may *not* do what he likes with his own. Nevertheless, I am quite certain that if you pull Rantremly Castle to the ground, and build a modern mansion in its place, the law will not hinder you."

"I should hope not, sir; I should hope not. Nevertheless, I am not one who wishes to ride roughshod over public opinion. I am chairman of several companies which depend more or less on popular favor for success. I deplore unnecessary antagonism. Technically I have the right to destroy this ancient stronghold to-morrow if I wished to do so, and if that right were seriously disputed I should, of course, stand firm. But it is not seriously disputed. The British nation, sir, is too sensible a people to object to the removal of an antiquated structure that has long outlived its usefulness, while the erection of a mansion replete with all modern improvements would be a distinct addition to the country, sir. A few impertinent busybodies protest against the demolition of Rantremly Castle, but that is all."

"Ah, then you *do* intend to destroy it?" I said, and it is possible that a touch of regret was manifest in my tones.

"Not just at present: not until this vulgar clamor has had time to subside. Nevertheless, as a business man, I am forced to recognize that a large amount of unproductive capital is locked up in that property."

"And why is it locked up?"

"Because of an absurd belief that the place is haunted. I could rent it to-morrow at a good figure if it were not for that rumor."

"But surely sensible men do not pay any attention to such a rumor?"

"Sensible men may not, but sensible men are often married to silly women, and the women object. It was only the other day I had the place let to Bates, of Bates, Sturgeon & Bates, a very wealthy man, quite able and willing to pay the figure I demanded. He cared nothing about the alleged ghost, but his family absolutely refused to have anything to do with the place, so the arrangement is off."

"What is your theory regarding this ghost, my lord?"

He answered me with some impatience.

"How is it possible for a sane man to have a theory about a ghost? I can, however, advance a theory regarding the noises heard in the castle. For years that place has been the resort of questionable characters."

"I SAT DOWN AT THE MACHINE, AND HE DICTATED A LETTER TO HIMSELF"

"I understand the Rantremly family is a very old one," I commented innocently, but his lordship did not notice the innuendo.

"Yes, we are an old family," he went on with great complacency. "The castle, as perhaps you are aware, is a great, ramshackle place, honeycombed underneath with cellars. I dare say in the old days some of these cellars and caves were the resort of smugglers, and the receptacle of their contraband wares, doubtless with the full knowledge of my ancestors, who, I regret to admit as a business man, were not too particular in their respect for law. I make no doubt that the castle is now the refuge of a number of dangerous characters, who, knowing the legends of the place, frighten away fools by impersonating ghosts."

"You wish me to uncover their retreat, then?"

"Precisely."

"Could I get accommodation in the castle itself?"

"Lord bless you, no! Nor within two miles of it. You might get board and lodging at the porter's lodge, perhaps, or in the village, which is three miles distant."

"I should prefer to live in the castle night and day until the mystery is solved."

"Ah, you are a practical man. That is a sensible resolution. But you can persuade no one in that neighborhood to bear you company. You would have to take some one down with you from London, and the chances are that person would not stay long."

"Perhaps, my lord, if you used your influence, the chief of police in the village might allow a constable to bear me company. I do not mind roughing it in the least, but I should like some one to prepare my meals, and to be on hand in case of a struggle, should your surmise concerning the ghost prove correct."

"I regret to inform you," said his lordship, "that the police in that barbarous district are as superstitious as the peasantry. I myself told the chief constable my theory, and for six weeks he has been trying to run down the miscreants who, I am sure, are making a rendezvous of the castle. Would you believe it, sir, the constabulary, after a few nights' experience in the castle, threatened to resign in a body if they were placed on duty at Rantremly! They said they heard groans and shrieks, and the measured beat of a clubfoot on the oaken floors. Perfectly absurd, of course, but there you are. Why, I cannot even get a charwoman or laborer to clear up the evidences of the tragedy which took place there six weeks ago. The beds are untouched, the broken china and the silver tray lie to-day at the foot of the stairway."

"Very well, my lord, the case presents many difficulties, and so, speaking as one business man to another, you will understand that my compensation must be correspondingly greater."

All the assumed dignity which straightened up this man whenever I addressed him as "my lord" instantly fell from him when I enunciated the word "compensation." His eyes narrowed and all the native shrewdness appeared in his face. I shall do him the justice to say that he drove the very best bargain he could with me, and I, on my part, very deftly concealed from him the fact that I was so interested in the affair I should have gone down to Rantremly for nothing rather than have missed the privilege of ransacking the castle.

When Lord Rantremly had taken his departure, walking to the door with the haughty air of a nobleman, then bowing to me with the affability of a business man, I left my flat, took a cab, and speedily found myself climbing the stair to the first floor of 51 Beaumont Street, Strand. As I paused at the door on which were painted the words "S. Brooks, Stenography, Typewriting, Translation," I heard the rapid click-click of a machine inside. Knocking at the door, the writing ceased, and I was bidden to enter.

The room was but meagrely furnished, and showed scant signs of prosperity. On a small side-table, clean, but uncovered, stood the breakfast dishes, washed, but not yet put away, and the kettle on the hob by the dying fire led me to infer that the typewriting woman was her own cook. I even suspected that the awkward-looking sofa which partly occupied one side of the room concealed a bed. By the one front window stood the typewriting machine on a small stand, and in front of it sat the woman who had visited me the morning before. She was now gazing at me, probably hoping I was a customer, for there was no sign of recognition in her eyes.

"Good-morning, Lady Rantremly," I said, which caused her immediately to spring to her feet with a little exclamation of surprise.

"Oh," she said at last, "you are Monsieur Valmont! Excuse me that I am so stupid. Will you take a chair?"

"Thank you, madam. It is I who should ask to be excused for so unceremonious a morning call. I have come to ask you a question. Can you cook?"

She looked at me with some surprise, mingled, perhaps, with so much of indignation as such a mild person could assume. She did not reply, but, glancing at the kettle, and then turning toward the breakfast dishes on the table by the wall, a slow flush of color suffused her wan cheeks.

"My lady," I said at last, as the silence became embarrassing, "you must pardon the impulse of a foreigner who finds himself constantly brought into conflict with prejudices which he fails to understand. You are perhaps offended at my question. The last person of whom I made that inquiry was the young and beautiful Madame la Comtesse de Valerie-Moberanne, who enthusiastically clapped her hands with delight at the compliment, and replied impulsively: 'Oh, Monsieur Valmont, let me compose for you an omelet which will prove a dream!' And she did. One should not forget that Louis XVIII himself cooked the *truffes à la purée d'ortolans* that caused the Duc d'Escars, who partook of the royal dish, to die of indigestion. It is a noble, yes, a regal art! I am a Frenchman, my lady, and, like all my countrymen, regard the occupation of a *cuisinière* as infinitely superior to the manipulation of that machine, which is your profession, or to the science of investigation, which is mine."

"Sir," she said, quite unmollified by my harangue, and speaking with the lofty pride which somehow seemed much more natural than that so intermittently assumed by my recent visitor, "have you come to offer me a situation as cook?"

"Yes, madam, at Rantremly Castle."

"You are going there?" she demanded almost breathlessly.

"Yes, madam; I leave on the ten o'clock train to-morrow morning. I am commissioned by Lord Rantremly to investigate the supposed presence of the ghost in that moldering dwelling. I am allowed to bring with me whatever assistants I require, and am assured that in the neighborhood there can be obtained no one who dare sleep in the castle. You know the place very well, so I shall be glad of your assistance if you will come. If there is any person whom you can trust, and who is not afraid of ghosts, I shall be delighted to escort you both to Rantremly Castle to-morrow."

"There is an old woman," she said, "who comes here to clear up my room, and do whatever I wish done. She is so deaf that she will hear no ghosts; and besides, monsieur, she can cook."

I laughed in acknowledgment of this last sly dig at me, as the English say.

"That will do excellently," I said, rising, and placing a ten-pound note before her. "I suggest, madam, that you purchase with this anything you may need. My man has instructions to send by passenger train a huge case of provisions, which should arrive there before us. If you could make it convenient to meet me at Euston Station, about a quarter of an hour before the train leaves, we may be able soon to discover all you wish to know regarding the mystery of Rantremly Castle."

Sophia Brooks accepted the money without demur, and thanked me. I could see that her thin hands were trembling with excitement as she put the crackling banknote into her purse.

Darkness was coming on next evening before we were installed in the grim building, which at first sight seemed more like a fortress than a residence. I had telegraphed from

London to order a wagonette for us, and in this vehicle we drove to the police station, where I presented the written order from Lord Rantremly for the keys of the castle. The chief constable himself, a stolid, taciturn person, exhibited, nevertheless, some interest in my mission, and he was good enough to take the fourth seat in the wagonette and accompany us through the park to the castle, returning in that conveyance to the village as darkness approached.

I could not but notice that this grave official betrayed some uneasiness to get off before night had completely fallen. Silent as he was, I soon learned that he entirely discredited Lord Rantremly's theory that the castle harbored dangerous characters, yet so great was his inherent respect for the nobility that I could not get him to dispute with any decisiveness his lordship's conjecture. It was plain to be seen, however, that the chief constable believed implicitly in the clubfooted ghost. I asked him to return the next morning, as I should spend the night in investigation, and might possibly have some questions to ask him—questions which none but the chief constable could solve. The good man promised, and left us rather hurriedly, the driver of the wagonette galloping his horse down the long, sombre avenue toward the village outside the gates

I found Sophia Brooks but a doleful companion and of very little assistance that evening She seemed overcome by her remembrances. She had visited the library where her former work was done—doubtless the scene of her brief love episode—and she returned with red eyes and trembling chin. She told me haltingly that the great tome from which she had been working, and which she had left open on the solid library table, was still there exactly as she had placed it before she was forced to abandon her work For ten years, apparently, no one had entered the library. I could not but sympathize with the poor lady, thus revisiting, almost herself a ghost, the haunted arena of her short happiness.

But though she proved so dismal a companion, the old woman who came with her was a treasure. Having lived all her life in some semi-slum near the Strand, and having rarely experienced more than a summer day's glimpse of the country, the long journey had delighted her, and now this rambling old castle in the midst of the forest seemed to realize all the dreams which a perusal of halfpenny fiction had engendered in her imagination. She lit a fire, cooked for us a very creditable supper, and bustled about the place, singing to herself in a high key.

Shortly after supper, Sophia Brooks, exhausted as much by her emotions and memories as by her long journey of that day, retired to rest, and I, left to myself, smoked a few cigarettes, and finished a bottle of superb claret which stood at my elbow. A few hours before I had undoubtedly fallen in the estimation of the stolid constable when, instead of asking him questions regarding the tragedy, I had inquired the position of the wine-cellar, and obtained cognizance of the key that opened its portal. The sight of bin after bin of dust-laden, cobwebbed bottles did more than anything else to reconcile me to my lonely vigil. There were some notable vintages represented in that gloomy cavern.

It was perhaps half-past ten or eleven o'clock when I began my investigations. I had taken the precaution to provide myself with half a dozen so-called electric torches before I left London. These will give illumination for twenty or thirty hours steadily, and much longer if the flash is used only now and then. The torch is a thick tube perhaps a foot and a half long, with a bull's-eye of glass at one end. By pressing a spring, the electric rays project forth like the illumination of an engine's headlight. A release of the spring causes instant darkness. I have found this invention useful in that it concentrates the light on any particular spot desired, leaving all the surroundings in gloom, so that the mind is not distracted, even unconsciously, by the eye beholding more than is necessary at the moment. One pours a white light over any particular substance as water is poured from the nozzle of a hose.

The great house was almost painfully silent. I took one of the torches, and went to the foot of the grand staircase where the wicked butler had met his death. There, as his lordship had said, lay the silver tray, and near by a silver jug, a pair of spoons, a knife and fork, and scattered all around the fragments of broken plates, cups and saucers. With an exclamation of surprise at the stupidity of the investigators who had preceded me, I ran up the stair two steps at a time, turned to the right, and along the corridor until I came to the room occupied by the late earl. The coverings of the bed lay turned down just as they were when his lordship sprang to the floor, doubtless, in spite of his deafness, having heard faintly the fatal crash at the foot of the stairs. A great oaken chest stood at the head of the bed, perhaps six inches from the wall, and beside this chest, at the edge of the bed, inclined a small round table leaning against the chest. The tablecloth had slipped from the sloping surface until it partly covered the lid of the chest.

I mounted on this carven box of black old oak and directed the rays of electric light into the chasm between it and the wall. Then I laughed aloud, and was startled to hear some one laugh directly behind me. I jumped down on the floor

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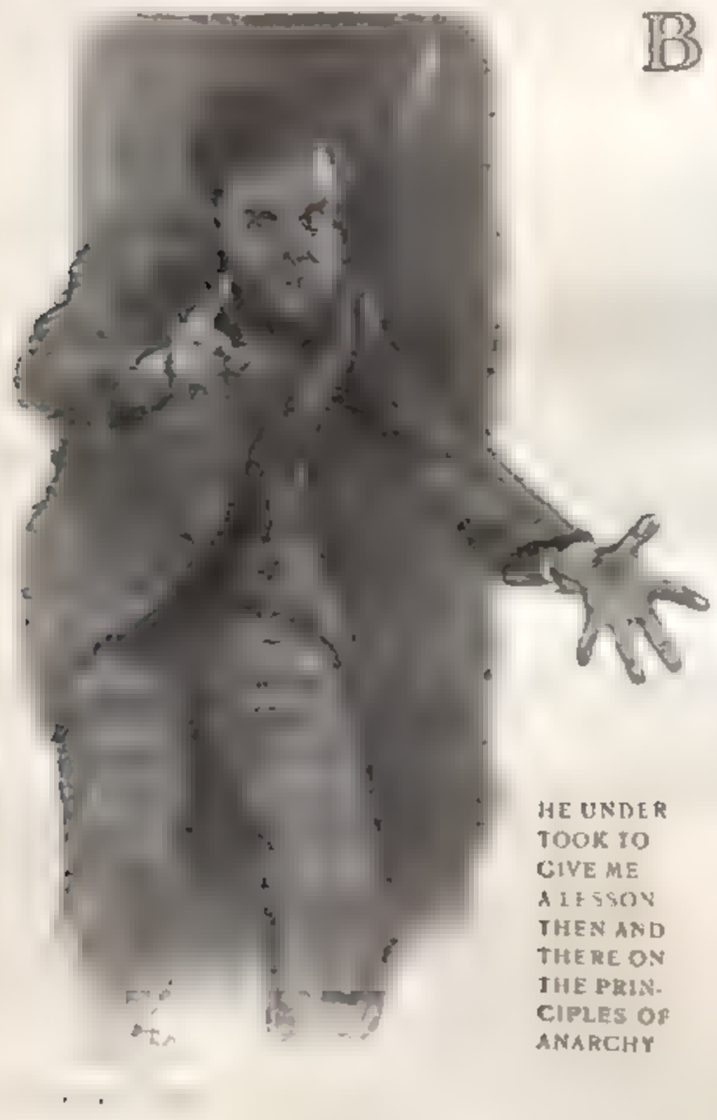
The Memoirs of an American

By ROBERT HERRICK

Author of The Common Lot, The Web of Life, etc.



HE UNDERTOOK TO GIVE ME A LESSON THEN AND THERE ON THE PRINCIPLES OF ANARCHY

CHAPTER XVIII

MEANTIME, for a little entertainment, we had a strike in one of our Indiana plants. At first it didn't make much difference: all the packers had been shutting down here and there during the cold months, and we were ready to close that special plant.

But as the severe winter of '94 passed, and the men saw that we were in no hurry to start until better times, they began to get ugly, to set fire to the buildings, and do other injuries. There was no police protection to amount to anything in any of those country places, and it would have cost too much to keep a sufficient force of hired detectives to guard the property.

It got on toward spring, and we wanted to open the place for a short run, but I was determined not to give in to the union, especially since they had taken to destroying the property. There had been a number of strikes that year, notably the great Pullman strike, followed by the railroad trouble It was a most senseless time for any one with a job to quit work, and the employer class were feeling pretty set about not giving in. I remember that, about this time, some of the preachers in the city, and, among them, the Reverend Mr. Hardman—Sarah's young man—got loose on the strike question and preached sermons that were printed in the newspapers. Hardman's ideas were called "Christian Socialism," and it sounded pretty, but wouldn't work twenty-four hours in Chicago. I wanted Sarah to try a new minister, but she was loyal to Hardman and thought there might be something in his ideas. . . .

Well, it got along into July, and I concluded to run down to our Indiana plant and see what could be done with the situation. There was a committee of the men to meet me in the superintendent's office. We talked back and forth a considerable time, and finally I said:

"See here, boys, I want you to come over the plant with me and let me show you what some of you strikers have done, and what it will cost us before we can open up

So the committee and I tramped over the place, and I pointed out damage to property that would cost the company over ten thousand dollars to repair

"Now, go home and ask your union if they will stand for that bill?"

They thought it was my little joke. They could not see that a union, to get its demands respected, must be responsible also for the damage done by its members. Nor could they see that, if our company wasn't making money, they could not make more out of us

At last, after talking with the lot of obstinate Poles for three hours, I turned them all away, with the suggestion that they might see a trainload of men arriving from the South in about a week if they didn't come back—for we were going to open on the first of the month. They trotted off to a saloon to talk it over. The superintendent shook his head and predicted a riot if we should try getting in new men

Then he and I went over the place together to see about improvements, and spent another hour going into every corner of the building

He left me up in the loft of the main building, while he went back to the office for some plans. I poked about here and there in the dusty, cobwebbed place. There was only rough scantling for a floor, and below my feet I could see the great gaping mouths of the vats, still filled with dirty, slimy water. Pretty soon I heard the tread of feet coming up the stairs. It didn't sound like the superintendent. He was a light man, and this was a heavy tread. I called out to the man to take care, as the light was none too good, and a tumble to the floor below into one of those vats would be no joke. He did not reply, and I was bending over, looking down and trying to make out where he was, when I felt some one reach out for me by the neck. I straightened up, and both of us came near falling backward through the loose boarding. I had an idea still that it was the superintendent

"What are you doing, you fool?" I cried, wondering what had got into the man.

Then I threw him off a bit and could see that I had to do with a heavier man than the superintendent.

"So you get some other help, you do, you do?" he began to spit at me. "I know you! I know you!"

There was very little light in that loft, for the day was pretty well over. All that could be seen by me was a stocky, short man, with a face covered by a heavy beard. I remembered that I had seen him in the office with the other men, though he had not done any talking

"Well," I said, "what are *you* after, John?"

Considering my position, I thought it was as well to speak good naturedly. It wasn't just the place for a wrestling-match

"I know you!" He came forward again and shook his fist in my face. "You are one of the men who murdered my friends. Yes, you did murder them'

"You're drunk, John," I said as coolly as I could.

"Yes, you do know. Seven, eight year ago. At the [illegible]

"So you are an anarchist! Those were your friends, were they?"

"And this time look out for yourself!"

He made a grab for me, and I jumped out of his reach In doing so, I shoved aside one of the boards, and went through part way. I could see twenty feet or so below me those tough looking vats.

It was only a question now how soon the superintendent would be coming. I could not hear the sound of his steps below. Perhaps my anarchist had settled him first. In that case there was little help for me. If I should struggle he could kick me over the edge as easily as he could brush a fly from the side of a bowl. So, to gain time, I thought I would get the man to talk. Then, at the last, I could grab him by the legs and fight it out in that way, or pull him down with me

"So you think you'll get even by killing me! What is the good of that? You'll be caught the first thing. And you and your mates won't get one cent more when I am dead than you've had before. I don't count for so much. Some one else will take my place in this business, and you will have the same trick to play over again. He will boss you, and you will work for him."

My theory of life seemed to amuse my earnest friend, for he undertook to give me a lesson then and there on the principles of anarchy.

"Maybe all the others like you will get killed some day," he concluded

"Perhaps, John," I answered. "But you'll never kill us all. That's one sure thing. And if by any luck you should do away with all my kind, your own men would take to robbing you on a big scale as they do now on a small one. Now give me your hand and help me out."

Very likely his answer to my bluff would be my end. But I was tired out, holding my two hundred pounds there in the air with my elbows. Strangely enough, while I watched him, waiting for him to act, and expecting the last blow, I did not seem to care half as much as I should have expected to. I thought of Sarah and the children; I hated to leave the job I had set myself half done, with a lot of loose ends for other folks to bungle over, and it didn't look inviting down there below! But the fall alone would probably do for me at once, and, personally, my death didn't seem to be of much consequence.

"WHEN A MAN PUTS A PISTOL IN YOUR FACE AND ASKS FOR ALL THE MONEY YOU HAVE ON YOU, YOU DON'T WAIT TO SEE WHERE YOU HIT HIM, DO YOU?"

But my anarchist friend made no move. It seemed to trouble him, the way I took his attack. So I gave a great heave, raised myself half up to the girder where he stood, and held out my hand.

He took it! A moment more I found myself standing upright beside the man. The next thing was to get him to continue his conversation a few floors lower down, where there would be less likelihood of losing our balance in the course of a heated argument! But first I sat down, friendly-like, on one of the cross-beams, and began to talk.

"So you are an anarchist? Yes, I helped to hang your friends. I had some doubts about the matter then. But just here, now, after my experience with you, I haven't any at all."

Then I gave him a good sermon—the gospel of man against man, as I knew it, as I had learned it in my struggles for fortune. I showed him how I was more bound than he, hand and foot, for he could run away, and I couldn't. At bottom he wasn't a bad sort of fellow, only easily excited and loose-minded. In conclusion I said:

"Now we'll just step down. I am going home to get some sleep."

I started, and he followed on after me. It was a rather creepy feeling I had, going over those stairs! They were perfectly dark by this time, and steep.

"You'll try to fix me for this?" the fellow said, when we reached the bottom of the stairs, and I had started toward the office.

"I guess we'll call this square," I replied, "and forget it. Good-night."

He made a line for the gate, and that was the last I ever saw of him. I found the superintendent locked in the office, where he had been spending his time telephoning to town for help.

Then I took the train for Chicago. That was the greatest bracer I ever had in my life. Hanging there and expecting every minute to be shoved down into the vats below had steadied my nerves for a good long haul. It was needed, too.

CHAPTER XIV

THE Saturday after my little adventure in Indiana, as I was riding downtown in a street car, my eye was caught by a coarse cut in the newspaper that the man opposite me was reading. The cut seemed in a general way familiar. Underneath it ran these flaring headlines:

BRIBERY OF A JUDGE!
OFFICIAL IN PACKING CONCERN IMPLICATED!
EXCLUSIVE STORY IN THE NATIONALIST!

I bought a copy of the paper, and when I reached my office I read the article. It was sprung, plainly enough, to hit Garretson, who was up for reelection, and, in the main, they had a straight story—Lokes, Frost, the judge's brother-in-law, and all. And the right figures, too! The reference to Slocum and me was vague, and Ed was left out altogether. My picture, which had first caught my attention, was put in alongside of the judge's and labeled "Vice-President and General Manager of the American Meat Products Company." The inference was plain, and they wouldn't have dared to go so far, I judged, if they hadn't their facts where they could produce them. There was no word of the story in the other papers. I folded up the article and put it away in my desk, then telegraphed Slocum, who had gone to Kansas City on some railroad business for Farson and me.

Luckily, the Nationalist was not a sheet that ever found its way into my house, but that evening I looked apprehensively at Sarah. She was pale and quiet—she had been downtown all day shopping—but said nothing to indicate that she was disturbed about anything. The next day was Sunday, and though Mr. Hardman's preaching was not much to my liking, I drove over with Sarah to the little church on the North Side where he held forth. There was a pretty large congregation that morning, mostly women and poor people of the neighborhood, with a sprinkling of North Side men whom I knew in a business way.

The Reverend Mr. Hardman never preached a good sermon that he had written out beforehand. He was one of those Episcopal preachers who come out in front of the chancel-rail, cross their hands, look down on the floor and meditate a few minutes to get their ideas in flow. Then they raise their eyes in a truly soulful manner and begin.

To-day, for some reason, Mr. Hardman didn't go through his trick. He marched out as if he had something on his mind to get rid of quick, and shot out his text:

"For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

Then he began talking very distinctly, pausing every now and then after he had delivered a sentence. He said that we had fallen on evil days, that corruption was abroad in the land, polluting the springs of our national life. And the law-breakers came and went boldly in our midst, the rich and powerful, the most envied and socially respected, and so on. Every one knows the style of his remarks from that introduction. Most preachers nowadays feel that they must say this sort of thing once or twice a year, or their people won't think they read the papers. So long as he kept out in the open I had no objection to his volleys. I had heard it all before, and in the main I agreed with him—only he saw but the speckled surface of the truth.

Suddenly his right arm, which had been hanging limp by his side, shot out, and as we were sitting pretty well up front it *seemed* to point at me. Sarah gave a little start, and her cheeks flushed red.

"And I say," he thundered, "that when such men come into our churches, when they have the effrontery to mingle with God fearing people, and, unrepentant of their crimes, desecrate this sanctuary, yea—partake of the Holy Body—I say it is worse for them than if they were mere common thieves and robbers! I tell you, my people, that here in our very midst they come—*one* comes, a man who has defied the laws of man and God, the most sacred; who has corrupted the source of justice; who has bought that which the law denied him! This man has used . . ."

I had been getting angry, and was looking the minister in the eye pretty fiercely. At that moment Sarah gave a little groan. She was very white.

"Come!" I whispered to her, getting up. "Come! It's time you got out of this."

At first she shook her head, but as I refused to sit down she rose to follow me. I had stepped to the aisle and turned to give Sarah my arm when she fainted—just sank down with a groan into my arms.

"So this is the gospel you preach!" I called out to the minister, who had stopped his talk and was stepping forward as if to help me raise Sarah. "Let her alone! You have hit her hard enough already. Another time when you undertake this kind of business you had better know what you are talking about!"

He stood very white and rigid, while I and one of the ushers who had come forward to help me lifted Sarah and carried her to the door. When we got to the end of the aisle Sarah opened her eyes and stood up.

"I have had enough of *your* gospel, my friend!" I called back. "I am going where I shall hear religion and not [illegible]."

Sarah groaned and pulled at my arm. Once in the carriage, she turned her face to the window and looked out as if she were still shocked and sick. I tried to say something that would soothe her, but I could only mutter curses for that meddlesome Pharisee, who thought it was his duty to punish his flock.

"Don't talk about it!" Sarah exclaimed, as if my words gave her pain.

So we rode home in silence all the way. As we neared the house she turned to me.

"Just say it isn't true, Van!"

I began to make some kind of an explanation.

"No, just say it isn't true!" she interrupted. "I can't understand all that you are saying. Just say that you haven't done anything wrong. That's all I want."

"But some people like that two-cent piece Hardman would think it was wrong, Sarah," I had to say after a while.

She gave a little groan, and never opened her lips again. When we entered the house May was there. She had come over for the day.

"Why, my land!" she exclaimed on seeing us. "What brings you people back so soon? Sarah is sick!"

Sarah looked ready to faint again. May helped her up to her room, and I went into my study. Pretty soon May came down into the study.

"What's the matter with Sarah, Van?" she asked. "She seems all queer and out of her head."

Then I told her what had happened.

"Did you see the piece in the paper?" I asked at the end.

May shook her head. "But I shouldn't wonder if Sarah did."

"Why do you think so?" I asked.

"Why, she seemed troubled about something yesterday when she came into the house after she had been downtown shopping. She asked me whether I generally believed the things I saw in the papers. I asked her what kind of things, and she said—'Scandals about people in business.' I thought it was queer at the time."

"She won't talk to me about it," I remarked.

May didn't make any reply to this, and we sat there some time without talking. Then May asked in a queer voice:

"Tell me, Van, is there anything in that story? Is it true in the least way?"

"I'll tell you just how it was," I answered.

May was not the kind of person that could be put off, and I was glad to give her the inside story. So I told her the circumstances of the case. "It was blackmail and robbery—the judge was waiting to be bought. Those rats stood between us and what we had a perfect right to do. There isn't a business man in this city who, under the circumstances, would not have done what we did!"

"I don't believe that!" May exclaimed in her sharp, decisive little way.

She sat looking at me, the same look on her face that I remembered for twenty years. And the next thing that she said was pretty much what I thought she was going to say:

"Van, you are always a great hand to think what you want to believe is the right thing to believe! You know that!"

She smiled unconsciously, with the little ironical ripple that I knew well, and I smiled, too. I couldn't help myself. We both seemed to have gone back to the old boy and girl days. But I was angry, too, and began to defend myself.

"No," she interrupted. "It isn't a mite of use for you to bluster and get angry, Van. I don't trust you! I haven't for some time. I have been bothered for Will. Don't you let him mix himself up in your ways of doing things, Van Harrington!"

"If he is so terribly precious," I said hotly, "I guess you had better take him back to Jasonville."

"Maybe I shall," she answered quietly. "I'd take him to the meanest little place in creation rather than know he had done any such thing as you say you have done!"

We were both pretty angry, and yet we both smiled. She was such a snappy, strong little woman—I admired her all the time she was making me angry. Somehow, it brought back all that time long ago when I had thought the world began and ended with her. We had never been so near that time since. And I think she felt somewhat in the same way.

"Well," I said at last, "I am not going to fight this thing out with you, May, or any other woman. I have too much else on hand. I am answerable for all I do or have done. If you and Will don't like our company, why, we have got to do without you."

I wish I hadn't been so small as to make that fling. She flashed a look at me out of her eyes that made me come to my senses in a moment. I took her by the shoulders. "See here, May, we mustn't quarrel. Let's all hang together in this, as in other things. You women don't know what business means!"

She smiled back into my eyes. "It seems to be just as well we don't!" In a moment more she added: "But you

mustn't think that I can make up like this. You and I don't look at things in the same way.

"Never did!" I added. "At any rate, you had better go now and look after Sarah. She can't go on this way. She's got to come round and take this more sensibly. She isn't like you, May!"

"No," May retorted. "She isn't. But this hurts her, too. Perhaps she cares more what folks *say* than I do. And she believes her religion, Van."

"That's all right. It tells her to forgive, and not to judge, and a few other sensible truths, which that minister forgot to-day."

"I never expected to hear you, Van Harrington, asking for quarter in that way!" she flashed.

Then she went back to Sarah. What my sister-in-law said kept me busy thinking. I admired the way she took the matter, though it made me pretty angry at the time. It seemed straight and courageous, like her. If we had married, down there at home in the years past, there would have been some pretty lively times between us. I could never have got her to look at things my way, and I don't see how I could have come to see things her way. For, in spite of all the preacher and May had to say, my feeling was unchanged: women and clergy, they were both alike out of [illegible] some other kind of earth than this. I was made for just this earth, good and bad as it is, and I must go my way to my end.

CHAPTER XV

IT WAS the Monday morning after Mr. Hardman's outbreak and Slocum was waiting for me at my office. In reply to my telegram he had come back from Kansas City, where he had been attending to some business in connection with Farson's railroad.

"They got it pretty straight this time," was all he said as a greeting, with a care-worn sort of smile.

"They can't prove it! We'll bring suit for libel. I must put myself straight — for family reasons."

But the lawyer shook his head doubtfully.

"That wouldn't be safe, Van! It's too close a guess. I rather think they've got all the proof they want."

"Where did they get it, then? Not out of Lokes. He hasn't any reason to squeal. Nor the judge, nor his brother-in-law!"

"Of course not; but how about Frost? This is the way I figure it out: when those fellows were euchred in their hold-up game by Garretson's dismissing his injunction they were mad enough and bound to find out who sold them. It didn't take them long to see that the judge had been fixed. They nosed around, and spotted the judge's brother-in-law as the one who made the trade. Then they started out to get proof."

"Well?"

Slocum looked at me shrewdly.

"I have been thinking about that all the way on here. There is only one man left in the combination."

We stared at each other for a minute.

"You don't mean *him*!" I gasped.

"Who else?"

"Not Hostetter — not Ed!"

"Send for him, and we'll find out," he answered shortly.

I telephoned out to our office in the Yards to send Hostetter to me, and while we waited we discussed the story in all its bearings.

"We've got the trick," Slocum commented in reply to my desire for action. "And Marx, who managed this business for Carmichael, is shrewd enough to see it. *They* won't bother us."

There was some comfort in that reflection — no matter what the scandal might be, we had the London and Chicago properties in our possession, and nothing short of a long fight could wrest them from our control.

"The only thing to do," the lawyer continued, "is to keep quiet. The papers will bark while the election is on, and it looks mighty bad for Garretson. But out here most people forget easily."

It was queer to hear old Slocum talking in that cynical tone, as if, having taken the side that was not to his taste, he had pleasure in pointing out its safety.

"Well," I grumbled, thinking of May and Sarah, "it's mighty uncomfortable to be held up by nuts like Lokes, Frost and company, and then be branded as a briber!"

"What do you care?" Slocum asked harshly. "It won't hurt you much. You'll make money just the same."

Perhaps he was thinking of the honest men in his own profession, the honorable men at the head of the bar, who would know him henceforth as my hired man.

Hostetter arrived, a shifty stare in his eyes. He had changed a good deal since he had slept out on the lake front. He was a heavy man, now, with a fleshy face, and his dress showed a queer love for finery. He wore a large seal ring, and a paste diamond in his tie, which was none too clean. His sandy mustache dropped tight over his mouth. In spite of his dress and his jewelry, he was plainly enough the countryman still.

"Ed," I said at once, "have you been talking to any one about that matter of the bonds — the deal with Lucas Smith?"

He glanced at Slocum and then at me. One look at his face was enough: the story was there.

"You low dog!" I broke out.

Slocum tried to hush me, while Hostetter muttered something about not having done anything wrong.

"You're lying, Ed! Tell me the whole truth! Did you sell what you knew to the Nationalist, or to Frost and his crowd?"

He was stubborn, and refused to answer. I turned to the lawyer:

"See that man! I picked him out of the bankruptcy court two years ago, after I had given him his start in business. Last winter I sent his wife South and kept her there six months so that she could get well."

Then I turned to Ed.

"Whose bread are you eating now, to-day?"

He picked up his hat and started for the door. But I called him back. It came over me all at once what we had been through together, he and I, and I couldn't let him leave that way, sneak out of my sight for good and all.

"Tell me, Ed," I asked, more miserable than he, "are you going over to Carmichael to try and get more pay for this?"

"Maybe, if I did," he said sullenly, "it'd be some better than it is working for you."

"I don't think so — not long. Folks like you aren't worth much. Come, Ed! Did I ever do a mean thing to you? Didn't I give fifteen cents when we hadn't but twenty between us? What were you thinking when you did this dirty piece of business? Tell me you were drunk when you did it. I would have given you ten times as much as you ever got from them to know you couldn't do it!"

"FOR YOU HAVE DONE SOMETHING THE TASTE OF WHICH WILL NEVER GET OUT OF YOUR MOUTH"

He began to go to pieces and cry. Then he told me all I wanted to know. It was a plain case of the poison of envy. I was rich and on top, and he was working for me at thirty dollars a week. His wife, who had always kept a grudge against me for not making up to her in the old days, had taunted him for taking his wages from me. She kept telling him that I did nothing for him, and when she found out about his dealing with Lucas Smith, she saw her chance. Somehow Frost got on his track, and evidently they thought the information was worth paying for.

"Ed," I said finally, "you must go back to the country. That is the only place for you. You'll grow worse in the city the longer you stay. Your belly's got bigger than your brain, and your heart is tainted at the core. I will start you on a ranch I've got in Texas. Think it over and get out of this place as soon as you can. I'm sorry for you, Ed, for you have done something the taste of which will never get out of your mouth."

He left my office without a word. When he had gone Slocum came back and heard the story.

"It was a pretty tough thing for Ed to do," he remarked calmly, looking out into the muddy street, where men were hurrying along the pavements. I said nothing, and he added in the same far-off tone of voice: "That's the worst of any piece of crooked business: it breaks up the men you work with. Ed is a rascal now — and he was never that before!"

"That's true enough," I assented gloomily.

Slocum advised me to leave the city for a while, because should the Nationalist charges be investigated by the Grand Jury it might be awkward for me. But I refused to leave the city: no matter what happened, I was not the man to run and hide. And it never got to the Grand Jury. The Democratic papers made all they could out of the affair, and then after the election it died away. Garretson was reelected, and that was a kind of vindication for him.

What troubled me more than the racket in Chicago was the way that Dround and Farson and a few others of our backers might take the story. The Drounds were in Egypt, but they would hear the news quick enough. Mr. Dround was the president of our corporation, and the most influential single stockholder.

As for Farson I always counted a good deal on that crusty bit of rock, and he had never failed me yet. One thing after another had come up in the last four years, and he and his friends had backed me solidly. We were pretty deep in other enterprises than this packing business — railroads and land in that Southwest, where I had set my longing eyes. While the scandal was hottest we never heard a word from Farson, and I was congratulating myself that he had overlooked the matter, when one morning I received a dispatch: "Meet me Union Station twelve to-morrow. FARSON." That was all.

When he got out of the sleeper that noon he had not his usual warm smile. He refused my invitation to lunch at the City Club, and led the way into the fly-specked, smelly restaurant at the station. We ate our miserable meal, and he said little while I talked to him. It was like talking to a blank wall: he listened but said nothing. After a while he interrupted me in a kind of whisper, as if his mind had been absent all the time.

"What about this Judge Garretson? It isn't true?"

"What the papers say?"

The old gentleman didn't like newspapers. But he waved that aside with a frown.

"The facts!" he whispered across the table. "I should not have mentioned it had it not been for a conversation which I had the other day in New York with Judge Sloan, of the Chicago bar. He tells me that it is generally believed to be true that this Garretson was bribed, and that my old friend Jeff Slocum was mixed up in it. He says that Slocum has lost his reputation among the best men of the profession on account of his connection with this scandal. What are the facts?"

"This is hardly the place to go into all that," I replied somewhat tartly.

"I don't know but that the place is good enough," the banker observed dryly, "provided you have the right things to say." But straightway he took the frost out of his severe tone by one of his most genial smiles, and added more gently: "Perhaps you young men don't realize how serious it is for you to have such rumors get around about your reputation. Why, my boy, it puts you in another class! You are no longer *gentlemen* who can be trusted with honest people's money and confidence."

Think of a man taking that tone to you these days! I said: "When a man comes out of the alley and puts a pistol in your face, and asks for all the money you have on you, you don't wait to see where you hit him, do you? We don't here in Chicago. The men who are making all this talk were the hold-ups, and they did not get our money!" I laughed.

But he did not laugh with me — instead, he shut up like a clam all of a sudden. He finished his corn-beef hash and tea, making a few remarks about the train service on the road he had come over. I asked him some questions about our railroad matters, but he merely mumbled "Um, um," to all I had to say. Finally he said with his usual calm courtesy that he had some letters to write, and as the train for the West he was to take did not leave for some time he would not detain me, but would go upstairs to the waiting-room.

"Cursed old Maine Yankee," I said to myself, and I repeated it all over the telephone to Slocum.

"Maybe so," the lawyer telephoned back. "But we can't afford to let him get his back up."

It's up already — he's been talking with old Sloan, and I gather the judge didn't speak highly of you or me.

"I suppose not," came the answer over the wire, and Slocum's voice sounded dreary. "That kind of thing dies hard."

It *was* dying hard, and no doubt about it!

(TO BE CONTINUED)

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A Japanese Monroe Doctrine

THE Japanese have, as a rule, surpassed the praise of Von Moltke, who, it was said, could keep silent in seven languages; but Baron Kaneko lately rivaled Wu Ting-fang in speaking words that stab us with a smile. The chief lesson of Christian civilization, he says, with ironic circumlocution, is that might makes right, and that the grandeur of nations is measured by the number of men they can kill. These are ancient gibes. We made them ourselves long ago, and greet them with a cynical smile

When the baron betrays a determination to meet us on our chosen ground of aggrandizement, however, very different emotions arise. "Up to this war, the West has insisted that it was the sole factor in civilizing the world, and has walked through Africa and Asia as if it possessed the right, carving out territory. Japan has stood for Asia and national independence. She has checked the arrogance of the Muscovite, and the Western nations begin to respect the rights of the East. The effect on the Asiatics has been really a shock. During the past fifty years they have submitted to fate and to the arrogance of the West, but now they begin to see what Japan has done."

All this is very far from lending color to the cry that we shall have to fight Japan in the not distant future for possession of the Philippines. But it makes one sit up and think It is only a step further to a Japanese Monroe Doctrine—a very different thing from the open door Baron Kaneko's closing words, perhaps meant as a pleasantry—only add an ironic astringency: "The Anglo-Saxon civilization, founded on personal liberty and freedom of religious belief, will be welcomed in the Orient."

Stay-at-Home Stockholders

EVERYBODY, including himself, deplores the stay-at-home voter. But he is no more deplorable than the stay-at-home stockholder, who, in fact, is a much more prevalent and easily detected type.

The publicist feels bound to assume that the great majority of electors in a given city are personally honest. If they produce a rankly dishonest government it must be because they are too engrossed in their personal affairs to vote, or to give the matter sufficient attention to vote intelligently. As stockholders, the same personally honest men, in the same cheerful apathy, often produce a dishonest corporation.

If the idea that electoral power involves moral responsibility is too feeble in the average citizen, it is simply dead and buried in the average stockholder. He signs the proxy giving his vote to the management as a matter of course.

A great railroad or industrial company has thousands of stockholders. Its annual election is attended by a dozen or a score of persons. The president lays his report on the table. A director moves that it be accepted, approved and placed on file. The general counsel moves that the acts and doings of the directors and officers during the fiscal year be, and they are hereby, in all things ratified, approved and confirmed. The secretary votes his bale of proxies affirmatively and the meeting adjourns

The acts and doings may include the bribery of a legislature. The clergyman and editor—supposing, rather fancifully, perhaps, that they are investors in the stock of the company—by their proxies solemnly approve and confirm. Sometimes a protest arises—when dividends are reduced, not when the decalogue is infracted. This tends to react upon the management, making it very scrupulous about dividends, but rather good-naturedly tolerant about the decalogue.

Exactly how much personal honesty is there behind the common attitude which refuses to admit personal responsibility for anything that we do not personally do?

If it is "his business," the American wishes to run it to suit himself without the interference of any mere minority stockholder. If it isn't his business and he is merely a minority stockholder, he lets the other fellow run it. So, good democrats as we are, our great corporations are all oligarchies or monarchies. As good democrats we must assume that those forms of government easily lend themselves to corruption. It is an interesting fact that English corporations are in reality much more democratic in government than ours. The stockholder goes to the annual election, and makes a speech if he isn't satisfied.

Intellectual Dry Rot

ALL this discussion and denunciation of Russian bureaucracy in every city, town, village and hamlet of the United States ought to be exceedingly valuable. For the Russian bureaucracy is simply a gigantic object-lesson in the danger that menaces every human being after he gets started in life. Bureaucracy means at bottom nothing but the dry rot, and the dry rot is what we all have to strive to be delivered from daily.

The temptation to stop learning; the temptation to believe that one knows all it is necessary to know; the temptation to sneer at new ideas as "fads"; the temptation to be ruled by natural laziness instead of keeping alive to the fact that one must be a new man each new day if one is to meet its new requirements—that is a danger which confronts us all.

What one has learned is valuable chiefly because it is a higher rung of the ladder that lifts one within reach of the next higher rung. To-day's way of doing things is useful chiefly as a guide to to morrow's different and improved way. Bureaucracy is not merely a curse of Russia, or of governments and public administrations. It is a curse of individuals. If he is not careful, every man organizes himself into a bureaucracy, with himself as its stupid, prejudiced, unteachable, bureaucratic head.

Childish Hands and Brains

THERE are cases of child labor in this country that would make even a "clamorer for dividends" heartsick. There are instances of executive and legislative corruption in connection with this matter of child labor that would almost cause a sensation in Russia. And it is not surprising that those who are devoting their lives to this particular phase of philanthropy are often moved to violent language.

But, on the other hand, it must be evident that the question of child labor is not easy to settle by statute. Theoretically, a child ought to be at school, ought to be getting an education, including a knowledge of a trade or trades. Practically, this is not always possible at present; and the employment of children at certain kinds of work saves them from the bad influences of the streets, from contracting idle and vicious habits, from being the slaves of the ignorant caprices of unfit parents.

The man who employs a child at healthful labor that aids in its education is a public benefactor. The man who uses child labor to make dividends for himself and weak and ignorant citizens for the State is among the vilest of the vile. How draw a statute that will encourage the one kind of employer and will send the other kind to prison?

That is the problem. Meanwhile, let us vote more and more money to our public schools, to expand their activities in every wise direction so that they shall provide a magnificent all-around education for every sovereign American.

The Up-to-Date Lobbyist

ACCORDING to newspaper correspondents at our capitals, the briber of legislators has taken to cover. Only a few years ago the professional lobbyist was a layman who frankly told members of the legislatures what his corporation wanted and how much it was willing to pay. Now he is more likely to be a lawyer, and often a lawyer of excellent standing, who, with a professional fee in his pocket, pleads the cause of his employer under guise of disinterested public spirit. Newspaper men and honest legislators have constantly to be on their guard against what they are told by these wolves in sheep's clothing.

Much alarm has been caused by this new and more insidious form of corruption. In comparison, the old conveyor of boodle has been lauded as frank and sincere. After all, there is caste even in crime. The best remedy thus far suggested is that any one appearing before a committee of a legislature should be required to state under oath whether he is in communication with any of the interests affected. This might not very greatly lessen the evil—for perjury would be very hard to prove, and the man who would stoop to such skulking would hardly stick at a lie or two—but it would have the advantage of defining the issue clearly and absolutely, and so it would make impossible in a self-respecting lawyer those processes of casuistry to which human nature is so lamentably prone.

A Premium on Crime

A SILLY judge out West sent a man who had stolen a trifle to the penitentiary for five years and a man who had stolen $75,000 to the penitentiary for two years and a half His theory probably was the same as that usually advanced for such inequalities—that the embezzler, being an educated man, a "gentleman" of "excellent social standing," would feel the disgrace infinitely more keenly than his fellow-thief.

This is tempering justice not with mercy but with flapdoodle. There should be a graduated scale for penalties for crimes, descending—except in cases of habitual criminals—as the offender descended in mental and moral and social standing. The "gentleman" whose "superior sensibilities" are aroused not by the thought of committing a crime but only by the disgrace of exposure should be permanently withdrawn from the privileges of freedom. When a man whom nature and circumstance have given every advantage falls, he must be either a madman or a monster. To prate about his "sensibilities" is to put a premium on crime—and on anarchy.

The Billionaires' Bread Line

COMMISSIONER GARFIELD has announced that he will pursue his investigation of the Standard Oil Company to the bitter end. Nevertheless, he ought to be stopped.

There was the "beef trust." For many years the gentlemen composing it cut a great figure in the eyes of their neighbors. They were supposed to be powerful and opulent. They could borrow money at the bank. The best people accepted them as social leaders. Then along came Mr. Garfield and ruthlessly stripped them of every pretension to special consideration. He showed that they were not even a trust. Instead of having all the meat trade, as their friends had let on, they did not have even half of it. They were making no money—to speak of. True, cattle were rather low and steaks rather high; but the packers couldn't keep the margin. Probably the waiters took it away from them. To-day, in lower La Salle Street, Chicago, you may see certain gaunt men shrinking along close to the buildings, their hollow eyes humbly fixed on the flagging. They are the once lordly-seeming beef barons whose comparative poverty and positive helplessness the Commissioner laid bare.

It is to be feared that a like humiliating exposure awaits the oil magnates at Mr. Garfield's relentless hands. In fact, Lawyer Dodd has already attempted to break the force of the blow by publicly confessing that Standard Oil has no outside investments whatever and no influence with the railroads. We do not blame the oil men for putting the best foot forward and giving out the impression that they are some pumpkins. To try to appear prosperous is a very natural human weakness. What profit can any generous man derive from pricking the innocent little bubble of their pretensions and exposing them for the beggars they really are?

It is a cruel thing, after men have successfully striven for years to hide their chill penury under a warm-looking exterior, to suddenly drag their rags and crusts into public view in this way. If the investigating business keeps up, somebody will have to start a bread line for indigent billionaires

When a Man Marries

A VERY rich man and a very poor girl in New York recently announced that they were going to marry. The shadow of a big wing drifting across a chicken-yard could not create a greater hubbub. All the newspapers burst out and people talked of nothing else in the streets—simply because he had millions and she worked

If there is any matter in which personal taste should prevail it is in this matter of marriage. To select a life partner, a sharer in the responsibilities of parentage, on any other basis shows a mind pitifully dwarfed and warped. And this young man and young woman did nothing that ought not to be the common-sense commonplace of daily events.

Was the uproar a sign of how hard up some people are for something to talk about? Or was it a sign of the rarity of common-sense and self-respecting independence?

TALES OF THE ROAD

By CHARLES N. CREWDSON

CANCELED ORDERS

"DO I LIKE cancelations? Well, I guess not!" said the shoe man, straightening up a little and lighting his cigar as a group of us sat around the radiator after supper, one night, in the Hoffman House.

"I'll tell you, boys, I'd rather keep company with a hobo than with a merchant who will place an order and then cancel it without good cause. I can stand it all right if I call on a man for a quarter of a century and don't sell him a sou, but when I once make a sale I want it to stick. This selling business isn't such a snap as most of our employers think. It takes a whole lot of hard knocking; the easy, push-over days are all over. When a man lands a good order now it makes the blood rush through his veins; and when an order is cut out it's like getting separated from a wisdom tooth.

"Of course, you can't blame a Kansas merchant for going back on his order in a grasshopper year; but it is the fellow who has half a notion of canceling when he buys, and afterward really does cancel, that I carry a club for.

"Usually a fellow who does this sort of funny work comes to grief. I know I once had the satisfaction of playing even with a smart buyer who canceled on me. I was down in California. I was put on to a fellow named Johnson, up in Humboldt County, who wanted some plunder in my line—I've always found that the boys on this road are pretty generous in tipping a good chance off to one another. I couldn't very well run up to the place—it was a two-day town—so I wrote Johnson to meet me at 'Frisco at my expense. He came down, bought his bill all right, and I paid his expenses. Luckily, I put a clothing man on and we divided the expense. We treated that fellow white as chalk; we gave him a good time—took him to the show and put before him a thick porterhouse.

"Do you know, that fellow just simply worked us? He wanted to come to 'Frisco anyhow, and just thought he'd let me foot the bill. How do I know it? Because he wrote the house canceling the order before he started back home. I figured up how long it would take a letter to get to Chicago and back; and he couldn't have gone home and written the firm, so that I could get a notification as soon as I did, unless he wrote the cancelation the very night we took him to the theatre. I never had a man treat me like that.

"But didn't I get beautifully even with Brother Johnson! The next season, as a drawing card, I had my packer carry on the side, in his name, a greatly advertised line of shoes. It didn't pay a long commission, but everybody wanted it; and it enabled me to get people into my big towns so that I did not have to beat the brush.

"I had failed to scratch Johnson from my mailing-list, so he got a card from my packer—as well as a letter from myself—saying that if he would meet him in 'Frisco his expenses would be paid. He did not know that my packer and myself were really the same man.

"Johnson jumped at the advertised shoe line like a rainbow trout at a 'royal coachman.' It's funny how some merchants get daffy over a little printer's ink, but it does the work, and the man who advertises his goods is the boy who gets the fat envelopes. I'd rather go on the road to-day with a line of shoes made of soft blotting-paper, if they had good things said about them in the magazines, than to try to dish out oak-tanned soles with prime calf uppers at half price and with a good line of palaver. It's the lad who sticks type that, when you get right down to it, does the biz.

"The letter which Johnson wrote in reply to the card of my packer went something like this:

> "*My Dear Sir:* In regard to your favor of the 23d inst., I beg to say that I could use about $2000 worth of your line if you could come up here, providing that I would be the only one that you would sell your line to in my town.
>
> "Hoping to hear from you soon in regard to this matter, I remain, Very tru
>
> JOHNSON
>
> "P. S. If you can't possibly come up I'll come down.

"What did I do?

Well, I thought the matter over and decided that business was business and, there being no other chance in his town, I would let him come, and try to play even on the old score. I wired him to come down, and I thought, as I had him on the run, I'd better put on a pusher. My message read 'Come down, but you must be here to-morrow.'

Just after my telegram was off—I told the girl to rush it—I called at the office for my mail, and, bless me! I had a letter from another man in the same town.

"Now, say what you will, boys, a man's letter reveals his character. If a man has mean blood in his veins he will spread some of it on the paper when he writes to you. I've seen the pugnacious wrinkles of a bull pup's face many a time wiggling between the lines of a letter. And if there's sunshine in a man's heart that also will brighten up the sheet he writes on. The other man in the town wrote about like this:

> "Your postal received, and I must say I regret exceedingly that I have just sent in a mail order for your goods. I wish I had known that you were coming, for I always save my orders for the boys on the road when I can. Now, the next time you come to 'Frisco let me know a few days ahead and I will run down to meet you. I want your goods. My business in your line is steadily increasing. When I started in I just kept them for a side line, but your goods give first-class satisfaction and in the near future I shall handle nothing else. It will take a little time to clean out the other makes, but when I do—by next season—I shall have a nice order for you. I hope to hear from you before you get to the coast next—say a month before.
>
> "Truly yours, ——

"They say 'a bird in the hand is worth two in the bush,' but that depends on the kind of a bird you've got hold of. I'll let go of a tough old owl every time to take a chance at catching a spring chicken. Without second thought, I decided that I'd risk it on the man who wrote me such a gentlemanly letter rather than deal with the fellow who had canceled on me. Furthermore, I had half an idea that Johnson was making me fair promises only to get the line and cut the other fellow's throat, and that maybe he would cancel again. So I immediately sent Johnson a second telegram:

"'Cannot place the line with you. Do not come down.'

He was anxious for the line, and he wired back:

"'Write me particulars why you cannot sell me your shoes.'

"Well, wasn't this a chance? My clothing friend was with me again. I told him the whole story. 'Soak him good and wet!' said he. Together we wrote the following letter, and, you bet your sweet life, I mailed it, signing my packer's name:

> "*Sir:* You wire me to write you 'particulars why' I cannot sell you my line of shoes. Two of my friends at present in the hotel inform me that six months ago you met them here at their expense, were royally entertained by them, and that, after buying bills of them, you almost immediately canceled your orders, and that you have never offered to return to them the twenty-five dollars they spent for your traveling expenses. These gentlemen are reputable; and, to answer your question specifically and plainly, I do not care to place my line with you because in you I have no confidence, sir."

"That was getting even with a vengeance," spoke up the furnishing goods man. "In this canceling business, though, sometimes the merchant has just cause for it. I know I once had a case where my customer did exactly the right thing by canceling his order.

"Along the last part of October I sold him a bill of ties—this was down in Mississippi. I sent in a little express-order for immediate shipment, and for December first a freight shipment, which my man wished for the Christmas trade. I also took his spring order to be sent out February first.

"Now, my man's credit was good. For several seasons he had been discounting his bills. He had the personal acquaintance of our credit man and had made a good impression on him. I always like to have our customers meet our credit man face to face. It's a good thing always for the merchant to do, and it's also a good thing for the house to know their trade personally. Makes the man out in the country feel that he's not doing business with strangers.

"There was no reason, then, why there should have been any question in the credit department about making the shipment. The little express-order went out all right, but, by mistake, the credit man placed the February first shipment and the December first order away in the February first shipment file. This was a clear mistake—no excuse for it. Business men should not make mistakes.

"The first thing I heard of the matter was about New Year. I was struck dumb when I received notice from the credit department that my man had canceled his entire order. The credit man told me in the letter accompanying the cancelation notice that he had simply made a mistake in filing the December first order away with the February first shipment, and confessed that he had made a mistake, and begged my pardon.

"He was a gentleman with three times as much work on his hands as the firm had a right to expect of him for the money they paid him, so, although I was much put out because of the cancelation, I really did not have any resentment toward the credit man. If things move along smoothly in a wholesale house the man in the office and the salesman on the road must pull in double harness. I didn't quite agree with my friend in the office, though, when he said that my customer, when he failed to receive an invoice soon after the first of December, should have written in and said so. That wasn't the customer's business. It was the business of the house, if they were unable to make the shipment December first, to write the man and tell him so.

"Well, there I was! A good day's work had gone to the bad. My order—and it was a good, healthy one, too—was canceled, and perhaps all future business with a good friend and solid customer was at an end.

"The house had written my friend—his name was Morris—asking him to reinstate the order; but that was like putting bait before a fish at spawning-time. He wouldn't take the hook. I knew if there was any reinstating to be had I must get it.

"Now, Morris was a bully good friend of mine. I really liked him very much, and he liked me. I remember well the first time that I ever struck him. Really, I went around to see him just for a personal call. 'Look here, old fellow,' I said, 'I haven't come around here to do any business with you; but one of my old friends, Jack Persey, has told me what a good fellow you are, and I've just dropped in to say hello. Come, let's have a cigar.'

"After we'd lighted our cigars and talked a little I said, 'Well, I'm sorry to get off in such a rush, but I must quit

"'SAY, DOSE ARE PRETTY, ANYVAY'"

Editor's Note—This is one of a series of articles by Mr. Crewdson, each complete in itself, but all dealing with the work of the traveling salesman. The next will appear in an early number.

you. I must be packing up. My train leaves in about an hour and a half. Now, really, Morris' (he was such a whole-souled fellow that I found myself, without any undue familiarity, calling him by his first name after a very few minutes), 'I don't want to do any business with you. I don't wish to impose my acquaintance on you, but come on over to the sample-room and keep me company while I'm packing.'

"I really didn't intend to do any business with him. Some of the very best friends we all have on the road, anyhow, are those to whom we never sell a thing. Morris saw very plainly that I wasn't trying to work him — you can always pick out, anyway, the ring of truth in words you hear — I started to pack up without showing an item or even talking business. My line was displayed, however, and it was really a bird. Morris himself picked up a few samples and threw them down on the table.

"'Say, dose are pretty, anyvay. Sent me a dotzen of each von of dese in de color dey are dere ant also in black. I vill just gif you a leetle gomplimentary orter on account of Chack. There is no reeson, anyvay, vy I shouldn't do beesness mit you. You're de first man on de rote dot efer struck me and didn't ask me to buy goots. I don't like the fellow, anyvay, dot I'm buying ties from, and his house is not'ing to me. I vill gif you a goot orter next season.' And, sure enough, Morris did give me a good order next season and for several seasons after that.

"Lots of boys on the road swear at the Jews. I wish to say that I've done a great deal of business with them, and in my whole experience I've never had a Hebrew merchant promise me he would give me an order and not do so.

"So you can see how I was put out when I got a letter telling me that Morris had canceled his order. I really cared less about the amount of the order than I did about losing his friendship. So I sat down and dictated a letter to him that ran something like this:

"*Dear Morris:*

"'The worldly hope men set their hearts upon
Turns ashes — or it prospers — and anon,
Like snow upon the desert's dusty face
Lighting a little hour or two, is gone.'

"Our business relationship, Morris, has always been so pleasant that many a time I've hoped it would last always. I cannot forget the kind-hearted and friendly way in which you gave me your first order. I had hoped that the firm I was with would give you the good treatment which your friendship for me deserves; but here they are making a mistake with the very man who, last of all, I would have them offend.

"Now, Morris, I want you to feel that this is not my fault. I am sure it is not yours. It can be nobody's fault but the house's. They, like myself, are also really very sorry for this mistake.

"I inclose you the letter which I received from them in regard to this. Can you not see that they regret this sincerely? Can you not even hear the wail that our office man must have uttered when he dictated the letter? Now, Morris, I really know that my firm holds you in high esteem — and why should they not? You have always patronized them liberally. You have always paid your bills and you have never made yourself ugly toward them in any way. As I say, there is no excuse for this mistake, but if you are willing to pass all that up, Morris, I am sure you would make our credit man, who has made this error, very happy indeed if you would merely wire the house: 'Ship my goods as originally ordered.'

"And, after all, Morris, think this thing over and maybe you will conclude that 'tis better far to 'bear those ills we have than fly to others that we know not of.'

"'Can't be always sunny,
Dat's de lesson plain;
For ever' rose, my honey
Am sweeter fer de rain.'

"Your friend, - —— ———

"A good deal of poetry for a business letter," broke in one of the boys. This pricked the necktie man, who flashed back: "Yes, but if there were more poetry in business it would be lots more pleasant than it is."

"Well, how did you come out?" I asked.

"It so happened that I had to pass through Morris' town about ten days afterward. I didn't care anything about reinstating the order for the amount of it, but I really did wish to go in and see my old friend and at least square myself. So I dropped off one day between trains at Morris' town, and went up to see him.

"'Hello,' said he. 'How are you, old man? I'm glad to see you. Say, but dot vas a tandy letter! I've ortered a seventy fife-cent vrame for it.'

"'Well, Morris,' said I, 'I'm really very glad that a little difficulty of this kind has come up between us, as I like you to know just where I stand. Now, I haven't come here to do anything but just to see you. Cut the order clear out — I wish you would. It would teach the house a lesson and make them more careful hereafter. Come on down with me now. It's about supper-time and we're going to have a little feed.'

"WITH HIS BEFORE BREAKFAST GROUCH"

"I really meant every word I said. After we had finished a fried chicken or two, we started back to Morris' store.

"'Say,' said he, 'haf you got the copy of dot orter I gafe you?'

"I said: 'Why, no, Morris, you have one. Don't you remember that I gave one to you?'

"'Yes, but ven I didn't get my goots on time — I kept vaiting, und vaiting, und vaiting, und still dey didn't come — I took dot copy und I vas so tam mat dat I tore it op and t'rowed in der stove.

'Well, if you wish to look over the copy, Morris, I can easily run down to the depot and tear my tissue paper one out of my order-book.'

"'Vell, you go down und get it,' said Morris. 'Dere's som off de Cristmas goots it is too late for me to use, but we'll fix op de spring shipment som vay.'

"When Morris and I looked over my copy he cut out a few items of the December first shipment, but added to the February first order a great deal more than he canceled from the other one.

"'Say,' said Morris, 'do you know vy I reinsdadet dot orter? It vas dot letter you sent me.'

"'Well, I thank you very much,' said I.

"'You know, I don'd care so much aboud dose "vorldly hopes," and dot "sonshine," but vat dit strike me vas vhere you saidt: It's better fair to "bear de ills ve haf don vly to odders dot we know not off." Dot means: Vat's de use off chanching 'ouses?'"

"You can handle some men like that," said a hat man who sat with us; "but I struck one old bluffer out in South Dakota once that wouldn't stand for any smoothing over. He was the most disagreeable white man to do business with I ever saw. He was all right to talk fishing and politics with, and was a good entertainer. He always treated me decently in that way, but when it got down to business he was the meanest man on earth. A fishing-trip for half an hour, or the political situation during luncheon, is a pretty good thing to talk over, but when it comes to interfering with business I think it is about time to cut it out.

"My house had been selling this man for several years. He handled a whole lot of goods, but it always worried the life out of me, nearly, to get his bill.

"Last time I did business with him he had monkeyed with me all day long, and I had struck him as many as four times to go over to my sample-room. If he had made a positive engagement, and said that he would see me at twelve o'clock that night, it would have been all right, but he would turn away with a grunt from the subject of going to look at samples, not even giving me the satisfaction of saying he didn't want anything at all.

"I felt that I'd spent time enough in town, so, after supper, I [illegible] a bunch of soft hats under my arm and about nine o'clock he looked at them, picked out a few numbers and said he had to go to lodge. I boned him about straw hats — I was on my spring trip then.

"'Look at them to-morrow,' he grunted.

"I was beginning to get tired of this sort of work, so next morning early I went around to see another man in the town. I'd made up my mind I'd rather take less business from some one else and get it more agreeably; but, to my surprise, I sold this other fellow $1300, the best order I took that trip. And easy! He was one of the easiest men I ever did business with; and his credit was A1. He had no objections whatever to my doing business with others in the town, because he wished his goods put up under his own name rather than with our brands on them, so this really made no interference.

"I finished with him in the morning about eleven-thirty. On going over to my other man's store I found that he was still in bed. Pretty soon, however, he came in with his before-breakfast grouch. It was afternoon before I got him over to my sample-room. Meantime, I had gone to still another man and sold him a bunch of children's and misses' goods — such stuff as a clothing house has no use for.

"After I had taken the dogging of the gruff old codger for a couple of hours — he kicked on everything, the brims being a quarter of an inch too wide or too narrow, and the crowns not shaped exactly right — I finally closed the order and handed him his copy. As he put his hand on the door-knob to go he cast his eye over a pile of misses' sailors and growled: 'Well, who bought them?'

"I told him that I'd sold a little handful of goods to a dry goods store, knowing there would be no interference, as he didn't carry that line of goods.

'Well, a man that sells me can't do business with no other man in town!' he grunted, and with this slammed the door and left me. He didn't know that I'd sold his competitor a $1300 bill.

"When I was about half through packing up the old growler's clerk, who was a gentlemanly young fellow, came in and said to me hesitatingly: 'Old man, I hate to tell you, but the boss told me to come over and say to you not to ship that bill of goods he gave you until he ordered it. He is very unreasonable, you know, and is kicking because you sold some stuff to the dry-goods man down the street.'

'Thank you, Gus,' said I to the clerk — I was mad as fire, but not at him, of course. 'Now, Gus, the old man has sent me a message by you. I'll let you take one back to him. You just make a preliminary statement to him in these words. Now, mind you, you and I are good friends, Gus. Tell him I say he can take his business, including this order, and go with it now and forever plumb to — well, he'll understand. Then tell him, Gus, that I've sold not only this dry goods man a bill, but also his strongest competitor thirteen hundred dollars' worth of goods. Tell him, furthermore, that I appreciate all the favors he has done for me in the past in a personal way; that I have enjoyed visiting with him; that whenever I come back to this town again in the future I shall come in to see him; that if I can do him a personal favor in

"'THEY'RE AS HEAVY AS LEAD'"

any way, at any time, and anywhere, I shall be only too glad to do so, but that, absolutely, our business relationship is at an end.'

"'All right,' said Gus 'I'll repeat to the old man every word you've said I'm glad you've called him down It'll do him good.'

"And you can bet your life that I tore his order up without sending it in to the house and drew a big, black line through his name on my book, and have never solicited his business since.'

Irony in Missouri

"YOU did just exactly right," said the necktie man. "While I squared myself with my friend Morris, I was once independent with a customer who canceled an order on me. He came in to meet me at Kansas City. Two more of the boys were also there at that time. He placed orders with all of us—his name was Stone. The truth is, he came in and brought his wife and boy with him just because he wanted to take a little flyer at our expense. We'd written him telling him that we'd pay his expenses if he would come in. He went ahead and took a few hours of our time to place his orders At the time he did so I merely thought him a good, liberal buyer, but, as I now look back at the way he bought, he slipped down most too easy to stick I should have been sharp enough to have seen through his game at once.

"Sure enough, in three or four weeks the firm wrote me that Stone had canceled his order, stating that he believed he had enough goods on hand to run him that season, but that possibly, very late, he might reinstate the order. It was a polite letter and convincing.

"The fellow was good, so I thought it wouldn't do very much harm to try to get him to take the goods. However, I employed very different tactics from those I used with my friend Morris

I wrote him this way

> "*My Dear Brother Stone* I have received a letter from the firm stating that you have canceled the order which you placed with me in Kansas City. You know not how much I thank you for canceling this order. It gave me a great deal of pleasure to sell you this bill of goods, and now that you have canceled it I want you to be sure and make your cancelation stick, because then, sooner than I had really expected, I shall have that same old pleasure over again
>
> "It isn't always profit that a man should look for in business. What good does it do him to make a whol lot of money unless he can feel good on the inside? The *feel* is about all there is in life, anyway
>
> "Now, in future, you go right on as you have in the past; buy your goods from the other fellow. He will not charge you a great deal more for them than I would, and your loss will not be very great in that regard; but, each time that I come around, be sure to take a lot of my time and place an order with me, even if you do cancel it
>
> "Don't even trouble yourself about returning the fifteen dollars expense money that was given you, because the pleasure I had with you was worth that much to me alone. I shall square this matter myself with the other boys. No, I won't do that, because I am sure they feel in this matter just as I do
>
> "With very kindest regards, believe me, Brother Stone, truly yours,

"He wired the house to ship the bill and sent the message paid!"

"That was what I'd call a grafter," said one of the boys disgustedly

"Yes, you bet your life," said the wall paper man. "I, myself, once cured a man of the canceling habit. You know there are some merchants over the country who are afflicted with this disease

Too Quick for the Cancel-Man

"I HEARD of a druggist out in Pennsylvania who sold a little stuff in my line and who was noted for placing an order one morning and canceling it that very night. He had played a trick of this kind on me once, and I'd made up my mind that I was going to play even with him. I walked right over to my sample room early in the morning. I had my samples all spread out so that I could handle him quickly There were a lot of new patterns out that season—flaming reds, greens, cherry colors, blues, ocean greens—all sorts of shades and designs

"The druggist picked out a cracking good order. He took a copy of it himself in his own book. As we were working the wind turned the sheets of his 'memo.-book,' and I saw that he had in it a copy of an order in my line to another firm. This he had given only a few days before. Every season this druggist would really buy one big bill of wall-paper, but this was his trick: He would look at the line of every man that came along Sometimes he would place six or eight orders a season After placing an order he would immediately cancel it. Then he would wait as long as he pleased; at his leisure he would figure out which order pleased him best and reinstate that one

"Well, sir, when I had finished with him it was close on to luncheon-time, but I didn't do a thing but go hungry for a while. I took my notebook, made out his order as quickly as I could, wired it in to the firm (it cost me twelve dollars to do this), and told them to be absolutely sure to put all hands in the house to work on that order and ship it on the four o'clock fast freight that very day. I had to be in town the next day. Soon after breakfast I went into the druggist's store. I caught him back at his desk. I saw him blot the ink on an envelope he had just addressed. About this time a woman came in to get a prescription filled. As the druggist turned his back I very quickly lifted up the blotter, and, seeing that the letter was addressed to my firm, let it cover the envelope again. I knew this must surely be a cancelation letter."

Cured of Cancelitus

"AFTER the woman had gone out with her medicine, I asked the druggist to show me some hair-brushes which were in the case at the other end of the store from the desk. I made up my mind that it was going to take me longer to buy that hair-brush than it did the old man to buy my bill of wall-paper. I was getting his time. But I didn't rub my fingers over many bristles before up backed a dray loaded to the guards with the goods from my firm. The drayman came in and handed the druggist the bill of lading.

"'What's this?' said he.

"'Dammo,' said the drayman. 'They're as heavy as lead.'

"With this the drayman rolled the cases into the druggist's store. Of course, they contained the goods he had ordered from me.

"'Well, sir, he was the cheapest-looking fellow you ever saw, but he kept the goods, all right, and this cured him of *cancelitis!*"

Now, it must not be thought that every sale that is made must be put through by some bright turn. These stories I have told about getting ahead of the cancel-men are the extreme cases. The general on the field of battle must often order a flank movement, or a spirited cavalry dash; but he wins his battle by following a well-thought-out plan. So with the salesman. He must rely, in the main, upon good, quiet, steady, well-planned work. Some merchants compel a man to use extraordinary means to catch them at the start. And the all-around salesman will be able to meet such an emergency, right at the moment, and in an original way that will make them buy and then stand pat on their orders

FIRST AND LAST

By REGINALD WRIGHT KAUFFMAN

I am the semblance and substance,
The dream and the dream's desire
I am the rose and the perfume,
The flame and the ash of the fire,
I am the goal eternal
I am the Love-in-vain,
I am the thing you seek for—
Seek for and never gain

When the first wan light of morning breaks across your dreamless slumber,
And the fitful visions waken and the banished loves return,
In the legion of the hopes you lost, the wrecks beyond all number,
From the Place of Exiled Sorrows—see my lantern burn and burn.

Follow, follow!—You must follow through the tortured stony courses,
Over height and over hollow where delight has turned to pain;
In the land 'twixt sleep and waking, toward the great Dream River's sources,
For the prize you cannot gather, in the race you know is vain

You shall see the hopes you cherished in their nakedness returning,
Impossible and futile from the day you gave them birth,
And you still shall follow after, though you know the dreams are cheating
Which of old you thought were moulded of the finest things of earth

So I order: I, the master of the hunt, and fast and faster
Where the sweet shall turn to bitter I will drive you toward the Truth—
I am Lord of your Confusion, in the Land of Disillusion
I am he you sent to exile—the Ideal of your Youth.

I am the semblance and substance
The dream and the dream's desire,
I am the rose and the perfume,
The flame and the ash of the fire,
I am the goal eternal
I am the Love-in-vain,
The high intent, the promise spent,
The pleasure paid in pain

Studying Desert Plants

Uncle Sam's New Botanical Workshop in a Waste of Cacti

By René Bache

CEREUS GIGANTEUS OR GIANT CACTUS

THE latest scientific institution is a desert laboratory, so called, which has been established by the Carnegie Institution about two miles from Tucson, Arizona, on the site of the ruins of an old hill fort, held for many years by the Papago Indians against the marauding Apaches. It is in the midst of a region the aspect of which is rendered spectacularly weird by an extraordinary luxuriance of the cacti, which make up most of the vegetation, many of the plants being of gigantic size. The locality, indeed, was chosen for this very reason, in order that there might be an opportunity to study such forms of plant-life. The principal work of the laboratory will be to observe the structural and other expedients by which the plants of the desert are enabled to get along with almost no water; and the knowledge thus obtained will be utilized eventually by applying it, so far as may be practicable, in the raising of ordinary crops in the great dry belt. In a word, the object in view is to discover means of economizing water in places where it is scarce.

There is something rather picturesque in the notion of setting up a botanical workshop in the midst of such a desert as that in the neighborhood of Tucson. But there are some lessons to be learned there by the scientific observer which he could not acquire elsewhere. Scattered all over the arid waste are plants which, each after its own fashion, have solved the difficult problem of water supply by building reservoirs of their own, gathering the precious fluid in ways often highly ingenious, and preventing its evaporation by methods most curious and interesting.

PECULIAR VEGETATION OF THE DESERT

For instance, there is the "water-barrel plant," somewhat resembling a beer keg in size and shape, the whole interior of which consists of storage-cells for holding water. So admirably is its structure adapted to the purpose in view that, as recently ascertained by the investigators, over ninety-six per cent of the pulp which fills the vegetable receptacle is pure water. In fact, it is actually nothing less than a tank of water, which is of so excellent a quality that the Indians of the desert rely upon it almost wholly during periods of drought.

"A stranger left alone in such a region would die of thirst," says Dr. F. C. Coville, one of the experts in charge of the desert laboratory. "Yet there is water in all deserts, and the native animals and native human beings know how to find it." He states that the method adopted for tapping the "water barrel" is to cut off the top with one blow of a machete, thus exposing to view the mass of white pulp that fills the interior, and to mash the latter with the end of a stick. In this way a bowl-shaped cavity is formed, which quickly fills with water. The Indians, who worship the plant as a gift of the rain god, use the water for mixing bread as well as for drinking.

There is no desert so barren as to be without water-storing plants. The explorer Campbell, journeying across the plains of Central Africa—where as far as the eye could reach there was nothing but sand, billowing like the sea—found luxuriant creepers which were covered with large berries, each of them containing about three teaspoonfuls of palatable water. On looking more closely he was surprised to observe a number of mice (the only inhabitants, seemingly, of that inhospitable spot), which were busily engaged in nibbling the berries and carrying them to their burrows, as seamen would convey casks of water to their ships.

Unfortunately, many of the water-storing plants thus situated introduce into the fluid chemical ingredients which render it unpleasant to the taste and even nauseating. This is true of the "peyote" (found plentifully in the neighborhood of the desert laboratory), which, while in appearance plump and juicy as an apple, secretes a bitter and poisonous juice. The expedient is obviously designed as a means of protection against animals, which otherwise would be likely to eat the water-containing vegetable. In the case of the "water-barrel," however, an adequate defense is furnished by a formidable array of thorns and hooked spines covering the exterior, so that the plant does not find it necessary to offer further discouragement to depredators.

Now, one of the most curious facts ascertained by the scientists in connection with this study is that many of the desert animals never drink. This seems to be true of various species of rodents, such as the "jumping mouse" and "pocket mouse," which, when kept in captivity, not only take no water, but appear actually to regard it with repugnance when offered to them. Dr. J. A. Allen, of the American Museum of Natural History, kept a pocket mouse for three years without water, its food being exclusively dried birdseed. Inasmuch as a supply of moisture is absolutely necessary to animal life, the only plausible solution of the problem thus far suggested is that these creatures are able by some mysterious means to decompose starch, resolving that substance into the water and carbonic acid which constitute it.

In the neighborhood of the desert laboratory are numerous specimens of the "giant cactus"—a species which attains a height of forty feet. Its brilliant red, pear-shaped fruits contain a scarlet pulp with a flavor like strawberry jam, and in early autumn, when they are ripe, the Indians gather them, pressing the juice out of them into large earthenware pots. The juice, when fermented, is very intoxicating. It is called "tizwin," and to its demoralizing influence has been attributed many a fierce outbreak of the savage Apaches.

Many plants of the desert actually refuse to be cultivated. They will grow only under conditions hostile to ordinary vegetable life,

A BRANCHLESS GIANT CACTUS

with no water to speak of. Nevertheless, there are some which will eventually become domesticated and of important use to mankind. One of these is the "canaigre," which is probably destined to become of great economic value at a future day. Related to the common dockweed, its beetlike root contains thirty per cent. of tannic acid. The Indians have employed it from time immemorial for tanning leather, and inasmuch as the world's supply of tannin-producing materials, such as oak-bark, is running short, it may yet be utilized on an extensive scale to make good the deficiency.

For the present the desert laboratory will devote its attention exclusively to a scientific study of desert plants, and particularly of those which are most noteworthy as storers of water. It will not attempt to develop the economic usefulness of any of the species, though eventually some of them will doubtless be introduced into cultivation. There are among the cacti not a few that are so valuable that it seems a shame not to utilize them.

The sum and substance of the whole discussion lies in the fact that the desert is a source not only of many plants of more than possible economic value, but also of hints which may prove extremely useful in the raising of ordinary crops—particularly in regions where the water supply is deficient. Such hints will be gathered and utilized by the desert laboratory near Tucson, which will put the results of its observations into easily-assimilated shape for the benefit of the farmers.

WATER BARREL OF THE DESERT

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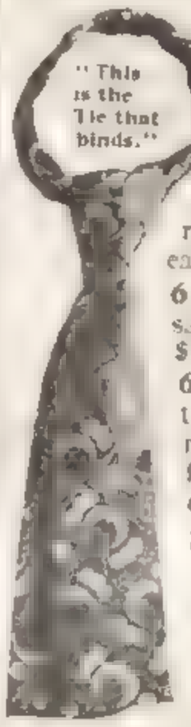

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THE INSECT TAX

Little Enemies to the Republic that Cost Us Millions a Year

IT COSTS more money to feed the bugs of this country than it does to support the Government. The entire expenditure in the management and control of the nation, including the pension roll and the maintenance of the army and the navy, is less than $700,000,000 a year—the minimum annual tax imposed by insects upon the people of the United States. Our farm products, which represent a value of about five billions of dollars per annum, suffer a shrinkage of at least $500,000,000 in every twelvemonth by the depredations of these despised but formidable enemies, and to this enormous sum must be added the cost of the damage to stored foodstuffs, of injury to forests and lumber, of harm done to cattle and other live stock, and of measures necessary to be taken for the protection of plants, beasts and human beings against bugs of various kinds

The losses caused by insects in this country during an average year are reckoned by experts of the Department of Agriculture as follows:

Cereals	$200,000,000
Hay and forage	53,000,000
Cotton	50,000,000
Tobacco	5,300,000
Truck crops	53,000,000
Sugars	5,000,000
Fruits	27,000,000
Forests and forest products	111,000,000
Miscellaneous crops	[illegible]
Animal products	[illegible]
Products in storage	[illegible]
Total	$785,100,000

It will be seen that the total runs up considerably above $700,000,000, and, even so, it does not include the large annual expenditure made in fighting injurious insects In the case of orchard fruits, truck crops, and such field crops as cotton and tobacco, this item amounts to a big percentage of the value of the product. For example, over $8,000,000 per annum is spent in spraying apple trees for protection against the codling moth, allowing for this purpose a cost of only five cents per tree, while in the case of citrus-fruits the expense of spraying, and treating with hydrocyanic gas, ranges from five cents to $1.50 for each tree.

Another class of losses not included in the above estimate is secondary. For instance, the enormous reduction in the crop of winter wheat caused by the ravages of the Hessian fly in 1900 put a serious check upon milling operations throughout the affected region, and did much mischief in the latter field of industry. Similarly, as has been illustrated recently, a shortage of cotton may raise prices to such an extent as to lead to the shutting down of cotton mills, while a shortage of grains must necessarily signify reduced earnings to shippers and railroad companies. In a word, any material shrinkage in an important product starts a train of losses, the total amount of which is quite beyond calculation.

After the crops have run the gauntlet of insect foes during their entire period of growth, they are still liable—especially cereals, tobacco and garden truck—to attack by destructive bugs of various kinds while in storage on the farm, or while accumulated in elevators and mills, or, again, while in transit, particularly in the case of long shipments by sea. Grains are all kept in storage until consumed, which means a long period for the bulk of the crop, and under these circumstances the weevils, beetles, flour moths, and other such pests [illegible] amount of damage Estimating the [illegible] they do at a minimum of [illegible] per cent. the annual loss from this cause alone is at least $100,000,000.

After the Tobacco

The last state of food products for human consumption is in the storeroom and kitchen of the dwelling-house, and not infrequently this opportunity for attack is improved by various insects. Meats are assailed by larder beetles and ham beetles, fruits by fruit flies and vinegar flies, and hominy, Indian meal and other cereals by their own particular enemies. Cured tobacco is exceptionally subject to such injury, its most important foe being a minute bug known as the cigarette beetle, which is now widely distributed in the United States, being found in practically all tobacco factories, warehouses and retail establishments. The item of $100,000,000 put down to represent the loss in an average twelvemonth by attacks of insects upon stored products of all kinds is undoubtedly within the mark

Of corn, which is our leading cereal crop, this country produces about one billion dollars' worth annually. It is damaged in an average year two per cent., or $20,000,000 worth, by the so-called corn root worm. The ear worm—a disgusting insect which will be found eating the end of nearly every ear of sweet corn that you can find in a field—injures it to the extent of an additional $20,000,000. By the infamous and highly-objectionable chinch-bug—an insect only a third of an inch long, but capable of almost inconceivable multiplication, which sucks the sap of the plant until the stalk dies—it suffers $20,000,000 worth of further harm, and a bill for an equal sum should be made out against a number of minor enemies, including billbugs, wireworms, cutworms, army worms and grasshoppers. Thus it appears that corn alone is damaged by insects to the extent of $80,000,000 per annum

Wheat, however, is the cereal which suffers most from insect depredations in this country. In an average year the chinch-bug does it $20,000,000 worth of damage. The "plant louse," which sucks the soft kernels in the forming heads of grain, causes a loss of at least $10,000,000 more. But the worst foe of this cereal is the Hessian fly—a minute gnat, resembling a tiny mosquito, whose maggot-like offspring feed on the young plants. It was brought to America by the Hessian troops during the Revolution, in 1776, and since then it has spread steadily westward. A field of wheat once attacked by it can hardly be saved, and it causes an annual shrinkage in the crop of about 50,000,000 bushels, representing a value of $40,000,000. Other enemies of this grain, including grasshoppers, sawflies, army worms and cutworms, swell the total loss to at least twenty per cent. In other words, were it not for these pests the wheat crop would be one-fifth greater than it now is, and would be worth $100,000,000 more in each year.

The Expensive Boll Weevil

The Government experts reckon that damage by insects to other cereal crops probably falls short of ten per cent. For all the grains, however, a ten per cent. average of loss is accepted as a basis to figure upon, such an estimate being certainly within the truth. Where hay and forage are concerned, the harm done is less conspicuous and not so well understood. Every farmer knows that they suffer injury by grasshoppers, army worms and cutworms, but he does not know much about the webworms and small grass-worms, which work about the base or roots of the plants, and which are so abundant that at the proper season the moths flit up in front of one at every step. Swarming also in grass lands are many species of minute leaf-hoppers which reduce the yield enormously, their small size being more than offset by their numbers. Obscure, but very important also, are the white grubs which assail the roots, often killing the grass outright over large areas, while a similar method of attack is adopted by the meadow-worms or "leather-jackets"—larvæ of the crane flies.

The forthcoming Year Book of the Department of Agriculture will contain a most interesting article on this subject, written by C. L. Marlatt, from advance proof-sheets of which the material here presented has been obtained. He says, in referring to the cotton, that the famous boll weevil against which the Government has been making such a strong fight, does about $20,000,000 worth of harm annually. It came from Mexico originally, and has been marching northward and eastward through Texas, threatening eventually to infest all of the cotton-growing region. The circumstance that it conceals itself inside of the growing cotton-boll, being thus safe from attack while devouring the interior, makes it a very difficult bug to deal with. There is also a boll worm of the cotton, which causes a loss of $12,000,000 per annum, while the cotton-leaf worm accomplishes additional mischief to the extent of $8,000,000 or $10,000,000. Thus it appears that three depredators are chargeable with $40,000,000 worth of injury done yearly to cotton in the United States.

Pillage in the Orchard

Orchard and small fruits suffer heavily from insect pests, both directly and because of the expensive methods of treatment necessary to prevent still greater losses. Taking into consideration the apple alone, one finds that its roots, trunk, foliage and fruit are assailed by several hundred bugs of as many different kinds, important among which are the limb borers, the leaf worms, the cankerworms, the tent caterpillars and the San Jose scale. Injurious to the fruit are the codling moth, the curculio and the apple maggot—objectionable creatures with which the consumer is rendered unpleasantly familiar by their borings and larvæ. The codling moth probably causes a greater money loss than any other depredator on fruit, destroying from one-fourth to one-half of the entire apple crop of the United States every year. As our average apple crop amounts to about 47,000,000 barrels, on which the average profit is one dollar a barrel, this expensive insect must cost us something like $15,000,000 every twelvemonth.

Losses due to biting and parasitic insect enemies of cattle are large, the principal culprits being the ox warble and various biting flies and ticks. Something like fifty per cent. of the cattle received at the stockyards in Chicago from January to June are infested and more or less injured by the larvæ of the ox warble, which not only perforate the hides, thus lessening their value, but seriously reduce the quality of the beef. Probably the damage done by this one insect to cattle in the United States averages not far from $20,000,000 per annum. It is well known that the shrinkage or check to fattening due to annoyance from biting flies and other pests that worry cattle runs up to a very expensive total every year, while buffalo gnats, gaddies, bot-flies and screw-worm flies levy a heavy tax. Reckoning the annual loss conservatively at ten per cent., the shrinkage in stock values due to bugs of one kind or another must be put down at $175,000,000.

The Department of Agriculture estimates as follows the minimum annual damage done by our fourteen most destructive insects:

Grasshopper	$50,000,000
Chinch bug	60,000,000
Hessian fly	40,000,000
Corn-root worm	20,000,000
Corn-ear worm	20,000,000
Cotton boll weevil	20,000,000
Cotton-boll worm	12,000,000
Cotton-leaf worm	8,000,000
Codling moth of apple	20,000,000
Potato-bug	8,000,000
Grain weevil	10,000,000
Army worm	15,000,000
Cabbage worm	5,000,000
San Jose scale	10,000,000
Total	$298,000,000

Mr. Marlatt, in conclusion, says that a considerable item to be included in the annual insect tax is the cost of protection against the bugs which attack the house, its food supplies, its woven fabrics, including clothing and carpets, and its human inmates. Screening against mosquitoes and flies and protection from roaches, clothes-moths and various small parasites, with and without wings, are a charge on every domestic establishment. If the sums expended for defense against such pests were tabulated for the whole country, the annual total would be at least $50,000,000, and possibly would be double that amount. Thus, and in view of other considerations, it is believed that the yearly loss of over $700,000,000 credited to injurious insects in the United States is much below the actual fact. It is a frightful tax upon the people, and the problem of lessening it is the most important that is presented to the economic entomologist.

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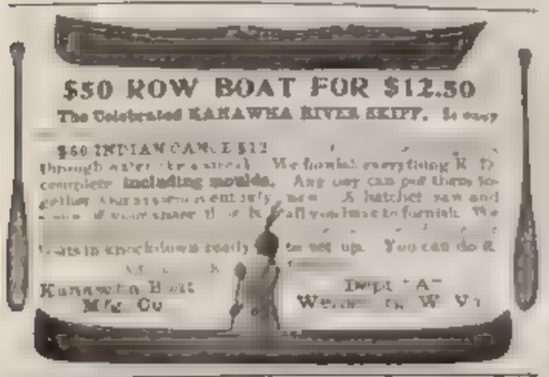

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THE TRIUMPHS OF EUGÈNE VALMONT

[Continued from Page 9]

again, and swung around my torch like a searchlight at sea. There was no human presence in that chamber except my own. Of course, after my first moment of surprise I realized that the laugh was but an echo. The old walls of the old house were like sounding-boards. The place resembled an ancient fiddle still tremulous with the music that had been played on it. It was easy to understand how a superstitious population came to believe in its being haunted; in fact, I found by experiment that if one trod quickly along the uncovered floor of the corridor, and then stopped suddenly, one seemed to hear the sound of steps still going on

I now returned to the stairhead and examined the bare, polished boards with most gratifying results. Amazed at having learned so much in such a short time, I took from my pocket the paper on which the dying nobleman had attempted to write with his half-paralyzed hand. The chief constable had given the document to me, and I sat on the stairhead, spread it out on the floor and scrutinized it. It was all but meaningless. Apparently two words and the initial of a third had been attempted. Now, however grotesque a piece of writing may be, you can sometimes decipher it by holding it at various angles, as those puzzles are solved which remain a mystery when gazed at direct. By partially closing the eyes you frequently catch the intent, as in those puzzle-pictures where a human figure is concealed among the outlines of trees and leaves. I held the paper at arm's length, and with the electric light gleaming upon it, examined it at all angles, with eyes wide open and eyes half closed. At last, inclining it away from me, I saw that the words were intended to mean "The Secret." The secret, of course, was what he was trying to impart, but he had apparently got no further than the title of it. Deeply absorbed in my investigation, I was never more panic-stricken in my life than to hear, in the stillness down the corridor, the gasped words: "Oh, God!"

I swept around my light, and saw leaning against the wall, in an almost fainting condition, Sophia Brooks, her eyes staring like those of a demented person, her face white as any ghost's could have been. Wrapped around her was a dressing-gown. I sprang to my feet

"What are you doing there?" I cried.

"Oh, is it you, Monsieur Valmont? Thank Heaven! I thought I was going insane. I saw a hand, a bodiless hand, holding a white sheet of paper.

"The hand was far from bodiless, madam, for it belonged to me. But why are you here? It must be near midnight"

"It *is* midnight," answered the woman. "I came here because I heard my husband call me three times distinctly: 'Sophia' [illegible]! Sophia!'—just like that."

"Nonsense, madam," I said with an asperity I seldom use where the fair sex is concerned, for I began to see that this hysterical woman was going to be of use to me during a research that called for coolness and clearness. "Nonsense, madam; you have been dreaming"

"Indeed, Mr. Valmont, I have not. I have not even been asleep, and I heard the words quite plainly. You must not think I am either hysterical or superstitious."

I thought she was both, and the next moment she gave further evidence of it, running suddenly forward and clutching me by the arm

"Listen! Listen!" she whispered "You hear nothing?"

"Nonsense!" I cried again, almost roughly, for my patience was at an end, and I wished to go on with my inquiry undisturbed.

"Listen!" she whispered. "Listen!"—holding up her finger. We both stood like statues, and suddenly I felt that curious creeping of the scalp which shows that even the most civilized among us have not yet eliminated superstitious fear. In the tense silence I heard some one slowly coming up the stair, with the halting step of a lame man. In the tension of the moment I had allowed the light to go out; now, recovering myself, I pressed the spring and waved its rays backward and forward, down the stairway. The space was entirely empty, yet the hesitating footsteps approached us, up and up. I could almost have sworn on which step they last struck

At this interesting moment Sophia Brooks uttered a piercing shriek and collapsed into my arms, sending the electric torch rattling down the steps, and leaving us in impenetrable darkness. Really, I profess myself to be a gallant man, but there are situations which have a tendency to cause annoyance. I carried the limp creature cautiously down the stairs, fearing the fate of the butler, and at last got her into the dining-room, where I lit a candle, which gave a light less brilliant, perhaps, but more continuous than my torch. I dashed some water in the lady's face, until she recovered her senses, then I uncorked another bottle of wine and bade her drink a glassful, which she did

"What was it?" she whispered

"Madam, I do not know. Very possibly the clubfooted ghost of Rantremly"

"Do you believe in ghosts, Mr. Valmont?"

"Last night I did not, but at this hour I believe in only one thing, which is that it is time everybody was asleep."

She rose to her feet at this, and with a tremulous little laugh apologized for her action, but I assured her that for a moment there had been two frightened persons at the stairhead. Taking the candle, and finding my electric torch, luckily, was uninjured, I escorted the lady to the door of her room, and then bade her good-night, or, rather, good-morning

The rising sun dissipated a slight veil of mist which hung over the park, and also dissolved, so far as I was concerned, the phantoms which my imagination had conjured up at midnight. It was about half-past ten when the chief constable arrived. I flatter myself I put some life into that unimaginative man before I was done with him

"What made you think the butler was going up the stair when he fell?"

"He was going up with my lord's breakfast," replied the chief.

"Then did it not occur to you that if such were the case the silver pitcher would not have been empty, and among the débris you must have found the rolls, butter, toast, or what not, strewn about the floor?"

The chief constable opened his eyes.

"There was no one else for him to bring breakfast to," he objected

"There you are very much mistaken. Where are the boots the butler wore?"

"He did not wear boots, sir. He wore a pair of cloth slippers."

"Do you know where they are?"

"Yes; they are in the boot-closet."

"Very well, bring them out, examine their soles, and sticking in one of them you will find a short sliver of pointed oak

The constable, looking slightly more stupefied than ever, brought the slippers, and I heard him ejaculate: "Well, I'm blowed!" He handed me the slippers, soles upward, and there, as I had stated, was the sliver of oak, which I pulled out.

Now, if you take this piece of oak to the top of the stair, you will see that it fits exactly a slight interstice at the edge of one of the planks.

"The butler," said I to him, "was not going up the stairs, but was coming down When he fell headlong he must have made a fearful clatter. Shuffling along with his burden, his slipper was impaled by this sliver, and the butler's hands being full, he could not save himself, but went head foremost down the stair. The startling point, however, is the fact that he was *not* carrying my lord's breakfast to him, or taking it away from him, but that there was some one else in the castle for whom he was caterer. Who is that [illegible]?"

"I'm blessed if I know," said the constable, "but I think you are wrong there. He may not have been carrying up the breakfast, but he certainly was taking away the tray, as is shown by the empty dishes."

"No, Constable. When his lordship heard the crash, and sprang impulsively from his bed, he upset the little table containing his own tray: it shot over the oaken chest at the head of the bed, and if you look between it and the wall you will find tray, dishes and the remnants of breakfast."

"Well, I'm blessed!" exclaimed the constable again

"The chief point of all this," I went on calmly, "is not the disaster to the butler, nor even the shock to his lordship, but the fact that the tray this serving man carried was used to bring food to a prisoner, who probably for six weeks has been without anything to eat"

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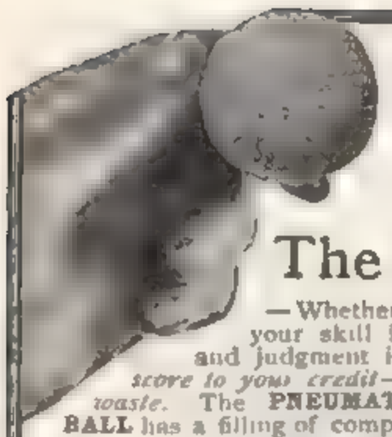

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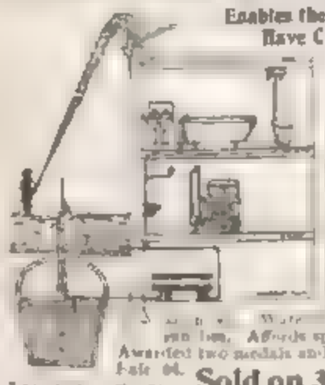

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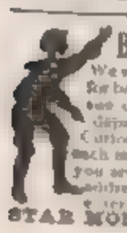

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"Then," said the constable, "he is a dead man."

"I find it easier," said I, "to believe in a living man than in a dead man's ghost. I think I heard his footsteps at midnight, and they seemed to me the footsteps of a person very nearly exhausted. Therefore, Constable, I have awaited your arrival with some impatience. The words his late lordship endeavored to write on the paper were 'The Secret.' I am sure that the hieroglyphic with which he ended his effort stood for the letter 'R,' and if he had finished his sentence it would have stood 'The Secret Room.' Now, Constable, it is a matter of legend that a secret room exists in this castle. Do you know where it is?"

"No one knows where the secret room is except the Lords of Rantremly."

"Well, I can assure you that the Lord of Rantremly who lives in London knows nothing about it. I have been up and about since daylight, taking some rough measurements by stepping off the distances. I surmise that the secret room is to the left of the stairway. It is probable that a whole suite of rooms exists, for there is certainly a stair coinciding with this one, and up that stair at midnight I heard a clubfooted man ascend."

Here the official made the first sensible statement I had yet heard him utter.

"If the walls are so thick that a prisoner's cry could not be heard, how was it possible for you to hear his footsteps, which make much less noise?"

"That is very well put, Constable, and when the same thing occurred to me, earlier in the morning, I began to study the architecture of this castle. In the first place, the entrance-hall is double as wide at the big doors as it is near the stairway. If you stand with your back to the front door you will at once wonder why the builders made this curious and unnecessary right angle, narrowing the farther part of the hall to half its width. Then, as you gaze at the stairway, and see that marvelous, carved oak newel-post, standing like a monumental column, you guess, if you have any imagination, that the stairway, like the hall, was once double as wide as it is now We are seeing only half of it, and doubtless we shall find a similar newel-post within the secret room.

"The walls need not be thick to be impenetrable to sound. Two courses of brick, and a space between filled with deafening, would do it. The secret apartment has been cut off from the rest of the house since the castle was built, and was not designed by the original architect. The partition was probably built in a hurry to fulfill a pressing need, and it was constructed straight up the middle of the stairway, leaving the stout planks intact, passing thus, as it were, through the wall. Now, when a man walks up the secret stairway his footsteps reverberate until one would swear that some unseen person was walking up the visible stairway on the outside. Now, I have here a pickaxe and a crowbar. I propose that we settle the question at once."

"You surely would not break the wall without permission from his lordship in London?"

"Constable, I have an idea that there is no Lord Rantremly in London, but that we shall find a very emaciated but genuine Lord Rantremly within ten feet of us, and I need not tell you that if you are instrumental in his immediate rescue without the exercise of too much red-tape, your interests will not suffer that you have the more speedily brought him food and drink."

"Right you are!" cried the constable, with an enthusiasm for which I was not prepared. "Where shall we begin?"

"Oh, anywhere! This wall is all false from the entrance-hall to this point up here. Still, as the butler was carrying the meal upstairs I think we shall save time if we begin on this landing."

I found the constable's brawn was much superior to his brain. He worked like a *sans-culotte* on a barricade. When we had torn down part of the old oak paneling, which it seemed such a pity to mutilate with axe and crowbar, we came upon a brick wall that quickly gave way before the strength of the constable. Then we tore out some substance like matting, and found a second brick wall, after which was a further shell of paneling. The hole we made revealed nothing but darkness inside, and although we shouted there was no answer. At last, when we had hewn it large enough for a man to enter, I took with me the electric torch and stepped inside, the constable following, with crowbar still in hand

I found, as I had surmised, that we were on the upper hall of a staircase nearly as wide as the one on the outside. A flash of the light showed a door corresponding with the fireplace of the upper landing, and this door not being locked we entered a large room, rather dimly lighted by strongly barred windows that gave into a blind courtyard, of which there had been no indication heretofore, either outside or inside the castle. Broken glass crunched under our feet, and I saw that the floor was strewn with wine bottles whose necks had been snapped off to save the pulling of the cork. On a mattress at the farther end of the room lay a man with gray hair, and shaggy, unkempt, iron-gray beard. He was either asleep or dead, but when I turned my electric light on his face he proved to be still alive, for he rubbed his eyes languidly, and groaned, rather than spoke:

"Is that you at last, you beast of a butler? Bring me something to eat, in Heaven's name!"

I shook him wide awake. He seemed to be drowsed with drink, and fearfully emaciated. When I got him on his feet, I noticed the deformity that characterized one of them. We got him through the aperture and down into the dining-room, where he cried out continually for something to eat, and when we placed food before him he could scarcely touch it

"Where is that butler?" he said at last.

"Dead," I replied.

"Did I kill him?"

"No; he fell down the stairway and broke his neck."

"Where is my father?"

"Who is your father?"

"Lord Rantremly."

"He is dead also.

"How came he to die?"

"He died from a stroke of paralysis on the morning the butler was killed."

The rescued man made no comment on this, but turned and ate a little more of his food. Then he said to me

"Do you know one called Sophia Brooks?"

"Yes. For ten years she has thought you dead

"Ten years! Good God, do you mean to say I've been in there only ten years? Why, I'm an old man! I must be sixty, at least."

"No, you're not much over thirty."

"Is Sophia

"No, she is all right, and she is here."

"Here?"

"Somewhere in the grounds. I sent her and the servant out for a walk, and told them not to return until luncheon time, as the constable and I had something to do at which we did not wish to be interrupted."

"I would like to be trimmed up a bit before I see Sophia."

"I can do that for you, my lord," cried the constable

"My lord?" echoed the man. "Oh, yes, I understand! You are a policeman, are you not?"

"Yes, my lord; chief constable."

"Then I shall give myself up to you. I killed the butler."

"Oh, impossible, my lord!"

"No, it isn't. The beastly jailer was getting old, and one morning he forgot to close the door behind him. I followed him stealthily out, and at the head of the stair planted my foot in the small of his back, and sent him headlong. There was an infernal crash. I did not mean to kill the brute, but merely to get a chance at escape, and just as I was about to run down the stairway I was appalled to see my father, looking like—looking like—well, I won't attempt to say what he looked like—but all my old fear of him returned. As he strode toward me along the corridor, before I thought what I did, I jumped through the secret door and slammed it shut. For weeks I have existed on dried crusts and scraps of food found in my prison

"Where is the secret door?" I asked.

"The secret door is that fireplace. The whole fireplace moves inward if you push aside the carved ornament at the left-hand corner."

"Is it a dummy fireplace, then?"

"No, you may build a fire in it, and the smoke will escape up the chimney. But I killed the butler, Constable, though not intending it, I swear."

And now the constable shone forth like the real rough diamond he was.

"My lord, we'll say nothing about that. Legally you didn't do it. You see, there's been an inquest, and that's brought the verdict, 'Death by accident, through stumbling from the top of the stair.' You can't go beyond a coroner's inquest, my lord."

"Indeed," said his lordship, with the first laugh he had given, "I don't want to go beyond anything, Constable; I've been beyond that accursed chimney too long to wish any more of it

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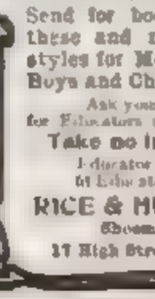

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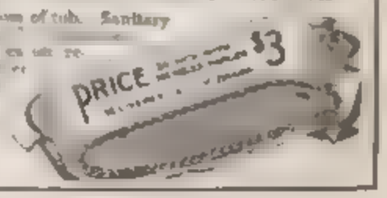

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THE GOLDEN HEGIRA OF MOCK DUCK—By W. O. Inglis

How One Girlish Celestial Taught American Gun-Play to the Yellow Men of Peaceful New York

MOCK DUCK is gone from New York, the smoothest, softest little fellow that ever made highbinders hide trembling in the dark and smelly rabbit-hutches of Chinatown. He took money with him, also, his big forty four calibre revolvers, a great quantity of cartridges, and his friends—Ng Loi, Ng Yon, Lou Wee and Aug Fon, titles which sound like baby pet-names, but which, if suddenly shouted behind some member of the On Leong clan, will cause the clansman to leap and run as if the great Kwan Goon himself pursued with thunderbolts.

Mock Duck is a thinker, a dreamer, an inventor; he is the bold innovator who first conceived the plan of welding smooth, deadly Chinese methods upon the beautifully organized graft system that makes American police methods revered by wicked ones all the world over. And having dreamt his dream, Mock Duck forthwith put it in action and gathered much gold. Forget if you please, his funny little name, which sounds like a synonym for some gastronomic deceit, and observe, if you will, this small yellow man who has lifted the gentle art of highbinding up to the high plane of twentieth century finance. He is a Mongolian Reorganization Committee of one

Wherever you find a Chinatown in an American city, you will find also a gang of soft-living Chinamen who collect toll of those who gamble, smoke opium and otherwise habitually break the law. A certain sum must be paid to the police in order to blind them to the law-breaking. The rest of the tax sticks to the fingers of the soft-living Chinese collectors. Indignant virtuous police officers will deny this with vehemence. Nevertheless it is, as a rule, the simple truth, as any intelligent Chinaman will tell you—if you first promise not to reveal his identity and bring him into conflict with the blue street-gods.

The Gamblers' Tax

When thousands of yellow men herded in the tangle of dingy little crooked streets west of Chatham Square, New York, a score of years ago, there was among them the usual large proportion of gamblers and opium smokers. Honest policemen often caught these wicked fellows at their evil deeds and dragged them to the police-court, where shocked magistrates imposed fines. The wicked fellows learned that evil ways cost much money. Wouldn't it be cheaper, in the long run, to give presents to the honest policemen? Surely. But in time this simple plan was worked to death; for so often did rude men in blue (of course, these *might* be base pretenders!) rush in and demand a fee, that the pursuit of pleasant vices became too expensive a luxury for ordinary yellow mortals.

Then burst into full bloom the On Leong Tong—literally Comfort-Life-Benevolent Association—a secret society for the alleviation of Chinamen's woes. I remember, as a cub reporter, asking an intelligent, well-dressed Chinaman what the On Leong Tong was. He replied:

"Chinee Flee-Mason s'ciety. Jus' like Flee-Mason. Velly good foh poo' Chinaman—help sick an' send dead Chinaman's bones back to China."

The intelligent écru gentleman forgot to say anything about the graft. But the On Leong Tong was much more benevolent than he recited. Under its kindly sway, police raids on Chinese gamblers and opium-smokers became very rare. Every habitual law-breaker gave a certain amount of money each week to the conscience fund of the amiable On Leong Tong. A large part of this money was placed where it would do the most good. The rest was retained by the wise ones of the Tong, who waxed fat and never, never worked. Also, the police never, never raided those who gave regularly to the conscience fund.

And if Mock Duck had not come out from Canton this commonplace, beatific state of affairs might have lasted forever, and the wicked ones and the virtuous guardians of the law would have lived happy forever after.

Alas, what mischief can be wrought by a man with an idea! Mr. Duck was only twenty years old when he arrived at San Francisco six years ago. He was a "merchant," of course, or the honest customs authorities would never have let him set foot on American soil. And such a merchant! He came to sell intellect, imagination, a clever though a severely simple contrivance. His name was Ah Foong, or some such commonplace at that time, for it was only after his unique exploits that his fearful but admiring countrymen called him Mock Duck, which, being interpreted, means The Black Grafter. Fine name. Literally it is, Mock—black; Duck—gets, seizes or grabs.

Careful inspection of San Francisco's Chinatown convinced this Young Napoleon of Highbinding that there was no money to be made there worthy of his notice. New York, the wise old ones told him, was as big as ten San Franciscos set side by side. Moreover, it was full of money and of highly cultivated graft.

Alone in New York

The eager youth immigrated, bringing only his ambition and his armament. He found Chinatown big and rich, with the On Leong Tong sitting snug in charge. Tom Lee, venerable immigrant from Canton, was the all-revered chieftain of this tong. He has been a real New York deputy sheriff with a big gold badge. He wears white man's clothes. When the great Li Hung Chang was here he was one of those who gave the visitor a banquet and was honored by being publicly recognized as a member of the illustrious Li family. The old fellow's real name is Li He Ling, which means Plumtree Thin and Long-lived.

To this wise old bird the ambitious youth said: "The graft here is very good. I am the Hip Sing Tong man. I want my share."

The venerable one uttered words which may be roughly translated as: 'Take a little run and jump up in the air.'"

"No," said the hungry one. Either I shall have my share, or there will be no more graft.'

The fellow was so persistent that the On Leong Tong put forth a decree concerning him. It was blazoned on red strips of paper in jagged black Chinese characters. It read: "For Mock Duck, $1000."

Simple but effective. There was no mention of killing, nor any need of mention.

But Mr. Duck was not dismayed. He is, as has been remarked before, unique among his fellows. When your ordinary fierce highbinder shoots, he shuts his eyes, girl-fashion; holds his revolver as far off as possible, and keeps pulling the trigger as long as he can hear the pistol pop. Not so with Mock Duck. He points the gun at his enemy, keeps both eyes open and shoots to hit. He has no fear.

So it befell that, when six On Leong Tong buccaneers waylaid and surrounded Mock Duck in Mott Street, forty-two pistol-shots were heard in rapid succession. When the smoke cleared away Ah Fee, a Newark tailor, one of the On Leong outfit, was found dead on the pavement. The five survivors jabbered to the nearest honest policeman and he arrested Mock Duck, who was smiling a simple, ingenuous, four-aces smile.

"Whaddu y' got to say?" the desk-sergeant of the Elizabeth Street police asked him.

"Bad men tried to kill me," Mr. Duck observed blandly, glancing for a moment at the late Ah Fee, whose mortal tenement was being carried to the back room to await the coroner's orders.

Twice was Mock Duck tried on an indictment for the murder of Ah Fee. The first jury stood seven to five in his favor, the second eleven to one. Then the district attorney let him go at large. Back he went to Chinatown.

It was at this time that Mock Duck first drew the attention of white men by reason of his inability to show fear. Probably he doesn't know how to flinch. He is worth careful scrutiny.

Imagine a slim, fine-boned youth of girlish delicacy of figure, the hands and feet tiny, the slender shoulders a trifle bent forward, the chest flat and narrow. He is but a trifle more than five feet high. His neck is so thin and fragile that it suggests the stem of a lily. In weight he is little more than a

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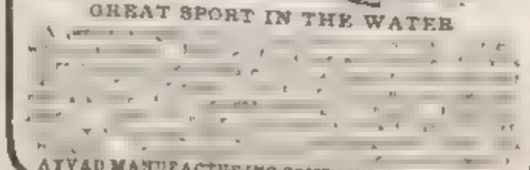

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hundred pounds. He looks as harmless as the gentle little green grass-snake. Yet beneath this soft and listless outside there lives the spirit of the tiger. The jaw of this yellow man is firm as steel. His lips meet like the steel lips of a vise. His nose, though small, is of the Roman type, distinctly a fighting nose, and his black eyes are signal fires of fixed determination.

Mr. Duck again called on the gentlemen of the On Leong Tong to let him in on the graft. They laughed at him. He trotted away to the Society for the Prevention of Crime, best known to contemporary history as the Parkhurst Society, and told its officers that he was a once wicked Chinese gambler, eager to reform. He was anxious to show them a score of Chinese gambling-dens in full blast.

Here was a ... Your ordinary Chinaman would suffer endless pain rather than appeal to the white man's law. Imagine, then, what marvelous inventiveness Mock Duck displayed. He went far beyond the law in appealing to the society whose hand is usually against the hands of those who enforce the law. Between the Prevention of Crime people and the police is a great gulf fixed. Mock Duck knew what he was about. The Parkhurst people will stop at no expense in the cause of Reform.

Raid followed raid. Fantan, pie-gow and all manner of gambling industries were broken up, the gamblers fined and sent to prison. All in vain did the elders of the On Leong Tong appeal to the friendly police.

"What can we do against them Parkhursts?" was the reply. "Mock Duck is steering them against the games and steering them right. Now, if anything was to happen to Mock ..."

Something had to happen. The date was the Sunday before last Thanksgiving. Mock Duck, whose price on the bulletin-board had now gone up to two thousand dollars, was beset by a dozen highbinders of the On Leong Tong in the shadowy place under the Elevated Railroad where the Bowery drops into Chatham Square. The fusillade sounded like the exploding of a pack of giant firecrackers. An innocent Italian wayfarer was killed. Mock Duck fell to the pavement with pistol bullets in his back and his stomach.

Who Shot Mock Duck?

Lee Sing, a Boston Chinese bravo, was accused by twelve Hip Sing Tong witnesses of having shot Mock Duck. Five On Leong Tong gentlemen made oath that one Lou Jow, then a fugitive, was the shooter. The jury of white men gave Lee Sing the benefit of the doubt and set him free. He went back to Boston and so passed out of this little bit of history.

But Mock Duck was still alive and still very hungry. He went back to San Francisco as soon as he could travel and stayed there until his strength returned. Then, with one bullet still resting inside him, this little fellow, who appears to the casual eye as genial as a dish of lemon ice cream, journeyed once more to New York, this time to get revenge as well as money. Down Mott Street he marched with four terrible highbinders at his heels—Ng Lot, Ng Yot, Low Wee and Ang Pen.

It is difficult for a white man to explain the terror these fellows created among the members of the On Leong Tong. It is perhaps enough to say that they never shot their eyes during a gun fight. They know how to shoot to kill.

This formidable army camped in the Hip Sing Tong clubroom in Chatham Square. The On Leong Tong men grown fat and nervous relative on many years of rice pickings looked on them with apprehension. This increased to positive terror when four yellow slips of paper were found next morning on the bulletin-board, next door to the Chinese theatre, which serves as a daily newspaper in Chinatown. Each of the yellow slip had these words in the zigzag characters of the Chinese alphabet:

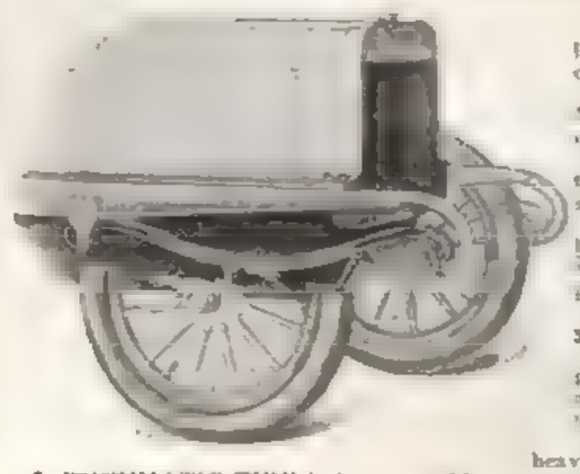
"For these men we offer the following prices:

"Tom Lee, $2000;
"Gin Gum, $1000;
"Lee Shun Quun, $1000;
"Lee Sing, $1000;
"Chu Gung, $1000."

Not a word, you will please observe, about killing. That would have been redundant. Every dweller in Chinatown knew what those prices meant and waited in unblinking patience for the tragedy.

But the tragedy was slow in developing because the placarded men hid and shivered

Why Winton Twin-Springs save Tires



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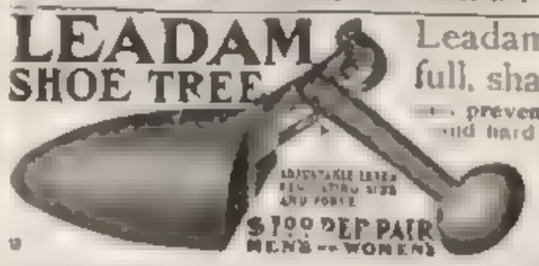

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in secret places. Tom Lee, the venerable Plumtree Thin and Long-lived, vanished in a recess so remote and dark and dim that for days his secretary, Gin Gum (Pure Gold), could not find him. Meantime, a letter, once more renewing the demand for a share of the graft, was awaiting Tom's attention.

The quiet members of the On Leong Tong urged their highbinders to go out and give battle to these bold invaders from San Francisco who shuffled up and down Mott and Pell and Doyers Streets smiling, bland, insolent, imperturbable, yet with an air of always searching for something.

"But no," whimpered the On Leong Tong bullies. "How can we fight? These are not men, but devils. They keep their eyes open when the American fire-weapon throws out death. Our eyes are shut. We will hide."

So for four days Chinatown was an armed camp in the midst of America's metropolis—or, rather, a one-armed camp, seeing that the other side would not arm and fight. During this period policemen patrolled and white people went to and fro in Pell and Doyers and Mott Streets as though nothing was imminent. And all the time Mock Duck, Ng Loi, Ng Yon, Lou Wee and Ang Fon marched to and fro, their hands grasping revolvers in the billowy sleeves of their blouses, their eyes seeking the foe in every shadowy doorway.

Lee You, an aged cousin of Tom Lee, had worked one day incessantly in his Mott Street laundry since six o'clock in the morning. The night was fine, so at nine o'clock he shuffled out into the street to take the air. He was a humble and inconspicuous member of the On Leong Tong. Who would want to hurt so poor a man?

"May you live a thousand years!" murmured a polite but strange voice back of him. The old man looked around. He saw a swarthy Chinaman with close-cropped head and a little round American soft hat.

"Hai-yah!" he screamed, his eyes goggling suddenly with a terrible fear. "Hai-yah! Ng Loi! Ng Loi!"

It was indeed the dark and menacing face of Ng Loi that grinned over his shoulder. As the old man dashed up the street, his lean shanks flying in ludicrous fright tangents, Ng Loi stepped back laughing and Ang Fon took up the chase. Soon he drew near to his prey, held a revolver close to his head and fired.

The bullet "creased" Lee You on top of the skull and dropped him unconscious. The police sent him to hospital and put Ang Fon in a cell. Mr. Fon acted like one who has been relieved of a long and tiresome task, smoked a few cigarettes and showed no curiosity at all about his victim.

Under heavy guard next day Tom Lee and Gin Gum went to the police-station and begged for help. The captain sent out all his plain-clothes men on the case. Of course, they wouldn't bother about it very long unless something happened. So the six placarded On Leong Tong men came out of their hiding-places and walked up and down through the quarter. True, one of them might be killed; but even so the murderers would probably then be arrested and all the other five marked ones would be safe.

The luck came to Chu Gung. As he passed the basement doorway at number eleven Pell Street at dusk, Mock Duck tiptoed out and after him for a few paces, pointing with his right hand. Instantly two of the Hip Sing Tong bravos softly hurried out of the opposite doorway and overtook Chu Gung, while Mock Duck vanished in the shadows. Ng Loi drew his revolver, but, before he could fire, a plain-clothes policeman grabbed it and wrenched it away. Another policeman got Ng's partner, Lou Wee.

"Not this time," was the only observation which the bland Chu Gung saw fit to make on the incident.

The police got Mock Duck next day; District Attorney Jerome himself appeared against the Chinaman in the Court of General Sessions, and, at his request, Recorder Goff held the gentle-looking little fellow for a third trial on the old Ah Fee charge. When he was admitted to bail there was a furious battle of words between Mr. Jerome and Frank Moss.

But after a few days Mock Duck was released on bail. He walked boldly into the On Leong Tong headquarters and made a proposition. The Plumtree Thin and Long-lived, being rather anxious to live up to the latter part of his name, agreed to this proposition.

Then things began to happen with rapidity. Ng Loi and Lou Wee were released on bail. So was Ang Fon, as the aged Lee You had recovered from his bullet-wound and was back at work in his laundry.

Mock Duck and his merry men vanished from New York but yesterday. An admiring though timid gentleman from Canton told me all about it.

"Mock Duck ve'y sma't man," he said. "He go back to San Francisco now and not reflo'm any mo' gamblers. On Leong Tong gave him fi' thousan' dolla'. I guess maybe ten thousan' dolla'."

And so they'll live happy forever after.

LITERARY FOLK
Their Ways and Their Work

WHAT FRANCE IS READING—Some of its novels, a little history, and one or two biographies.

¶ There is an old saying that to get the real taste of the caviare one must turn into a Russian. It is certain that to taste the real flavor of these books now piled before us we must turn into Frenchmen while we read them. The fact is that the ineradicable difference of race must be taken into account if we want to be just about anything.

Before opening any book written in another language than our own we ought to remind ourselves that certain views of life and certain human qualities belong to different races, just as oranges grow in Florida and truffles in France. We never grumble because they don't sprout in our back yards as apples or pears do. Why grumble or wonder, then, because these books express totally different passions and theories of life from those of the last novels published in New York?

The American, for instance, is seldom willing to bare his soul in print; to tell the chance reader of his dealings with his wife or his God; yet the charm and power of most French books lie in just such indiscreet disclosures. François thinks that the whole world is his friend so he takes it by the button and whispers to it the story of his love and hate. Take this little book for instance: Le Testament de ma Jeunesse, by ... Carnot (Paul et ... Lemerre). M. Carnot has written other books and they all revolve with more or less frankness the dealings of God with his soul. In this history he divides his hero's life into three books—Le Livre Païen, Le Livre Panthéiste, and Le Livre Evangélique. He belonged to a well-to-do family of the *haute bourgeoisie*. He was a turbulent, unpleasant youth during the cubbish period; doubted, with most of the modern lads of that kind, the necessity of any government and the existence of any God—and shouted out his anarchy and atheism on the street corners; "for the youth," says M. Carnot shrewdly, "who feels much and studies little, loves big words." He married the ideal French wife, familiar to us all in countless novels—charming, pure, capable, the idol of her children. They adore each other and their boys, until a storm of trouble breaks. Gustav, the oldest son, aged eleven, cherishes atheistic doubts and refuses to make his first communion. Despair of mother. Agony of father, who promptly adopts a pantheistic creed as likely to be acceptable to the lad. He asserts that God is everywhere—in the sun, the earth, the dog, the boy himself. Gustav, still rebellious, commits a crime and is barely saved from the galleys. The father, in this slough of misery, finds Christ, and accepts Him as the world's Healer. The book is a singular expression of the old Methodist idea of conversion, the Quaker belief in the possession of a repentant sinner by a mysterious flame or fervor, and the modern French Free Thought which will only tolerate a Church "without a temple, without priests, and without law." M. Carnot exults in his discovery of this new religion, and dedicates the work "to his country, the Vaudois Republic, on its one hundredth anniversary."

¶ A very different book is La Nouvelle Espérance, by the Comtesse de Noailles

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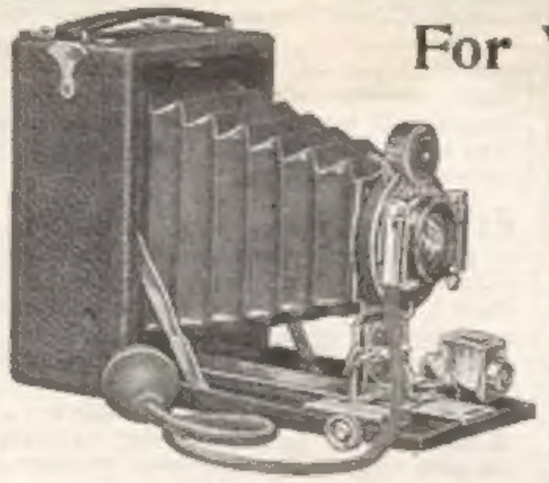
(Calman Lévy, Paris). This malodorous story has reached its ninth edition. It is not a novel—it has in it neither characters, aims nor events. Madame de Noailles has made a close study of a single person, a woman with great physical charm, who had neither wit nor force nor even the healthy instincts which make of many women and animals faithful mothers and members of their communities—be they in villages or barnyards. The one live force in this woman, Sabino, was a relentless animal passion which drove her from one community to another to destroy the lives of certain honest Frenchmen. The excessive honesty and innocence of these men become rather oppressive. The snake, Sabino, as she crawls from one home to another, wraps her victims in her coils, and makes an end of them, becomes, too, a little of a bore. This popular book is not clean, it is not powerful, it is not even interesting. When Sabino writes a long, dull letter to her last victim, swallows a cup of poison and dies as the clock strikes twelve, she commits the first rational and agreeable act of her life.

¶ M. Jean Revel, in his Contes Normands *(Charpentier, Paris)*, takes himself and his work as seriously as does M. Carnot, and with more justice. He sets out to give us pictures of the peasants of Normandy as they are to-day, reproducing faithfully their looks, costume, daily doings and sayings, even to their clipt patois. But he fails to make real human beings out of these picturesque shadows. The thing to which, unconsciously, he does give life, is the great marsh, in which are scattered the peasants' huts. It is as real and alive to us as Bret Harte's Carquinez Woods or Hardy's moor. The hero is taught by this great dumb, living presence all that he knows of law, of history or of religion. The rank growth, birds, snakes, creeping beetles, are all words to him in the great book of God. The human life, marriage, maternity and death, all are overshadowed by this terrible background of the marsh. M. Revel's painting is gross to foreign eyes; but he has, however, one quality rare enough in these days when so many novels are written only for the money they may earn—he is an artist, in love with his work. He has a profound pity for the poor marsh folk "whose natures," he tells us, "are great, noble and poetic, inherited from long-ago Norwegian Sea Kings. It has been a work of love to me to evoke these figures, effaced like old frescoes fading on a wall."

¶ Our old friend, Paul Bourget, has thrown the extreme argument of the Catholic Church against divorce into the shape of a novel: Un Divorce *(Plon-Nourrit et Cie, Paris)*. Gabrielle—another of the flavorless womanly women who always represent wives in the mind of a Frenchman—was married to a man whose vices were nameless; she procured a divorce and married—legally only—Albert Darras, a manly, honest, rational fellow, who is the only human being in the book—the other characters are merely lay-figures on whom M. Bourget can hang his arguments.

M. Bourget is one of the most orthodox and vehement modern defenders of the Church of Rome. He here urges its doctrine against divorce through chapters of declamation. Whether they will keep any unhappy married folk out of the courts one doubts.

¶ A little book which will amuse American readers is Infelice, by Mme. Charles Soyez *(Edition de la Plume, Paris)*. The title-page informs us that the tale "is adapted to the English." The scene is laid in this country and the incidents probably will astonish the ordinary American. We are introduced to a Presbyterian minister "whose cure is small and poor," yet who, when beggars appeal to him for advice, takes out a bead purse and pours showers of gold pieces into their hands, bidding them go and send their children to him, and he will adopt and educate them. We find here, too, that it is customary, when an American woman wishes to reveal her past life to the man whom she intends to marry, for her to throw it into the shape of a tragedy which she produces at one of the largest theatres, taking the leading part herself with enormous success. Indeed, if we credit this book, all events in American life are equally fortuitous. It is desirable, for instance, that one of the characters should be out of the way for a while, and then appear again. He sails on one of the great American liners between New York and Southampton. Midway, the ship is sunk and every living creature on board is drowned except this man, who is picked up in the sea by a passing boat and is brought back at the



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critical moment when he should appear in triumph.

It is curious to note, by the way, how, in French novels, the hero is still always rewarded and the villain punished at the exact instant when justice demands it. English and American fiction writers learned long ago to deal out bale and bliss with the uncertainty of real life.

¶ A more important book is La France et l'Angleterre. Cent Années de Rivalité Coloniale, by Jean Darcy *(Perrin et Cie, Paris)*. This is meant to be a warning trumpet-blast of war. M. Darcy, from his first sentence, implores his countrymen not to be lulled into security by the present friendly relations between King Edward and M. Loubet. He recalls the many intervals in the past when peace and even brotherhood existed between France and England, and were suddenly succeeded by hate and furious war. He proceeds to show how antagonistic the aims and political creeds of the two peoples are, and always must be — and then tells the history of Algeria and Tunis and of the three battlefields where France and England have so long wrestled for victory — the Nile, the Congo and the Niger. He recounts the armed missions sent by France through Africa, and gives a minute history of the struggle between the two nations for the mastery of the dark continent.

He is very bitter and vindictive against "perfidious Albion," though his own story convinces the reader that Albion, while perhaps selfish and greedy, tried to deceive nobody in the matter. She knew what she wanted and never changed her aim until she got it. Under every sovereign she kept her eye on that territory and moved toward it step by step; while France, now a monarchy, now a republic, to-day Catholic, to-morrow atheist, invariably changed her policy with every decade.

¶ There has been in Paris during the last year a large issue of biographies of "great Frenchmen," the majority of which are poor and conventional, having been written to order, although a few are original and vigorous. There was, of course, no chance for a new memoir of Victor Hugo, as he has been held up before his countrymen by countless biographers, and every fact of his life is as familiar to them as are the neglected shrines at the crossings in old Paris.

M. Gustave Simon, however, has had the lucky idea of giving us a report of M. Hugo's childhood, L'enfance de Victor Hugo *(Hachette et Cie, Paris)*. He begins the task as he would a religious ceremony, by a series of genuflexions. Your true Frenchman is a devout fellow. If he does not abase himself before the old shrines at the corner, he pays homage to Napoleon, or a Bourbon, or — Hugo. M. Simon quotes several pæans of worship from his contemporaries, as, for instance: "Les tours de Notre Dame etaient le H. de son nom." He sees nothing laughable in this. He takes Hugo seriously from the cradle to the grave. The patched green trousers which the great romancer wore as a boy are as significant to this doting biographer as would be the mantle of Elijah.

A prodigy he was, without doubt. Like Pope, he lisped in numbers. Before his fourteenth year he had poured forth tragedies, odes and tens of thousands of verses. In his fifteenth year an ode which he had submitted to the French Academy was "mentioned with honor." He announced then that "the great book of infinite truth written by Job, Jeremiah, Dante, Æschylus and Shakespeare was given into his hands, and that a voice from Heaven bade him continue it."

The story of Hugo's life, stripped of the decorations plastered on it by his indiscreet adorers, is thoroughly French, but also, more than others, significant and human.

The Reading Table

The Grand Passion

If I could Mary Jane, o-ho!
I'd feel so Anna-mated;
Because she Isabel, I know,
Who can't be dupli-Kate-ed.

If Fanny-thing's a puzzle, quite,
'Tis woman. Tillie tries her,
There's naught to Ada lovelorn wight
Who seeks to Ann Eliza.

He simply must a-Dora and
Have Faith and Hope and, therefore,
While he can Sue for her fair hand,
Naught Elsie seems to care for.

If Phœbe brave, a lover May
Quite Winnie girl nor tire her
By telling Hulda long, they say,
How much he does ad-Myra.

He'll keep their friendships Eva green
From Ruth-less airs and frigid,
Nor Letta chasm intervene,
For he'd propose to Bridget.

Possessing Prudence he'll be slow —
Devoid of Grace though she be —
To Adaline of grief, for, oh!
Without her where would Hebe?

— *Nixon Waterman.*

The Town of Impossibleville

There's a wonderful town named Impossibleville, a village eccentric and nice,
Where no matter how hot is the midsummer day the iceman leaves plenty of ice;
The dairyman never once waters his milk, but leaves yellow cream in his wake;
The baker gives always a full loaf of bread and the butcher serves porterhouse steak;
The coal man gives two thousand pounds for a ton nor weighs up his man with the load;
There isn't a lawyer, a judge or a court, and the old Golden Rule is the code;
It lies in the valley 'twixt Honesty Flats and the top of Millennium Hill,
And it's peopled by poets and dreamers and such — the town is Impossibleville.

'Tis a wonderful place is Impossibleville, where there's never a scramble for pelf,
And the rights of man's neighbor are valued as high as the rights that he claims for himself;
No hand-organ man on the street ever grinds out his ancient, soul-harrowing tunes,
Nor the man who must board haunted three times a day with small dishes of watery prunes;
There's only one church in Impossibleville, and that one is all that it needs,
Nor do people lose sight of the one grain of good in the chaff of their musty old creeds;
It's just over there where the Golden Rule Heights overlook the green vale of Good Will,
And it's peopled with folks it might please you to meet, is the town of Impossibleville.

No sewing society there ever meets unless there is something to sew;
Good deeds are the coin of the realm over there, and the whole town is Millionaire's Row;
The cider's all made from the ripest of fruit; and, open at bottom or top,
The barrel of apples looks equally good, for there's only one salable crop;
No matter what happens the cook never quits, nor ever was one known to scold;
The weather is perfect the whole livelong year, nor ever too hot or too cold;
It's right over there, near the town of Don't Fret, by the top of Millennium Hill,
And it's peopled with folks that you don't often meet, is the town of Impossibleville.

If you'd reach the cool shades of Impossibleville you must start on your journey in youth,
Turn aside from the main traveled road and set foot on the little used pathway of Truth,
Press on, past the towns of Fair Play and Don't Fret till you climb up the Golden Rule Heights,
And then you may look down the vale of Good Cheer and see all of these wonderful sights.
But many have set out with hope and light hearts determined to reach this fair spot
Who some way have strayed from the little used path and are lost in the marsh of Dry Rot,
But it's right over there, where the Golden Rule Heights overlook the green vale of Good Will,
And it's peopled by poets and dreamers and such, is the town of Impossibleville.

— *J. W. Foley.*

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should be deeply interested in what he has said about soda crackers, because they are the one food with which all of them are familiar.

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This is saying much for common soda crackers, and much more for **Uneeda Biscuit,** because they are soda crackers of the best quality. They are baked better—more scientifically. They are packed better—more cleanly. The damp, dust and odor proof package retains all the goodness and nutriment of the wheat, all the freshness of the best baking, all the purity of the cleanest bakeries.

Your Uncle Sam has shown what food he thinks best for his people. His people have shown that they think **Uneeda Biscuit** the best of that food, nearly 400,000,000 packages having already been consumed.

Uneeda Biscuit 5¢

NATIONAL BISCUIT COMPANY

Drawn for Eastman Kodak Co.
by C. Allan Gilbert.

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